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THE EMPIRE AND THE LEAGUE

BY SIR EDWARD GRIGG, M.P.

THE Abyssinian crisis has become a European one and threatens this country with possibilities to which, at this moment, the majority of our people are certainly not alive. The issue, as our Government sees it, has been put to the Assembly of the League in unmistakable terms by Sir Samuel Hoare :

> " In conformity with its precise and explicit obligations the League stands, and my country stands with it, for the collective maintenance of the Covenant in its entirety, and particularly for steady and collective resistance to all acts of unprovoked aggression."

M. Laval, speaking for France, ranged himself beside this country in loyalty to the principles of the League, though he hedged his declaration with some interpretative phrases and reservations, on which the last word has not yet been said. All other members of the Assembly who mounted the tribune supported the British view of the case. The Italian Government, however, has issued a statement " reaffirming in the most explicit manner that the Italo-Abyssinian problem does not admit of a compromise solution after the huge efforts and sacrifices made by Italy and the irrefutable documents contained in the Italian memorandum presented at Geneva ". That is the situation as I sit down to write this article, and it is obviously one in which writing is possible only with great reserve.

Whatever the outcome may be, it is plain that we are on the eve of further declarations and events which will shape the policy of this country and colour the destinies of Europe for years to come. There is reason, therefore, for reviewing the relations of the Empire and the League and trying to elucidate

the main principles of policy by which we ought to stand. Not the least important point is to decide what we mean by " the collective maintenance of the Covenant in its entirety "—to quote the Foreign Secretary's words—and in what way we can best assist the League to pursue its central object: peace and the building of a better world. The conception which inspired the Covenant at its making no longer holds. It is certain, for instance, that we should never have accepted the obligation contained in Article XVI if the representative of the United States at the Paris Conference had not accepted it as well. If we are to pledge ourselves anew to " the collective maintenance of the Covenant in its entirety ", it is essential that we should bear that particular article in mind, since (in the absence of the United States) it imposes a far greater responsibility upon the British Empire than on any other member of the League.

The undertakings of Article XVI are tremendous obligations, and there can be no question that since, in 1920, the Senate of the United States refused to commit that country to them, the tendency of opinion throughout the Empire has been to hold that they are not to be accepted literally in view of the weakened membership of the League. It is, indeed, manifest that the " collective maintenance of the Covenant in its entirety " must place an immensely greater risk and responsibility upon the shoulders of the Empire in the absence of the United States—to say nothing of a Japan armed to the teeth, a Germany already stronger by air than ourselves, and an Italy which may, if the full Covenant be implemented against her, join those other three Great Powers in their repudiation of the League. The adhesion of Russia, menaced East and West by two of those Powers and possessed of no fleet, is not much compensation, whatever her intentions, for what the Foreign Secretary called the " empty chairs " at the Geneva council-table. The fidelity of smaller nations to the Covenant, while by no means to be despised, suffers from the same lack of substance as material support. There is therefore no avoiding the conclusion that the " collective maintenance of the Covenant in its entirety " depends not on the overwhelming combination of great nations which the authors of the Covenant had in view, but on two alone out of seven Great Powers.

This progressive diminution of the material forces upholding the Covenant is manifestly a matter to which no statesman worthy of the name can be indifferent. If the Covenant could be guaranteed merely by the number of nations sincerely devoted to it and by the speeches which they made in its support, the outlawry of war as an instrument of national policy would be an accomplished fact. The reality, however, is different, and it has for some time past tended to divide those in this country who ponder the future of the League into two schools of thought. The older school has clung to the older vision. The newer school, led by one of the original authors of the Covenant, General Smuts, has come to disbelieve more and more completely in the virtue of any more " wars to end war ", or, in other words, of attempting to enthrone the principles of the League by appeals to force. Speaking in London only ten months ago, General Smuts dealt with critics of the League who used the crucial case of Manchukuo to declare that, unless the League were armed with force to carry out its policies, it was doomed to collapse. His answer, he said, was twofold :

> " In the first place, I cannot visualize the League as a military machine. It was not conceived or built for that purpose, it is not equipped for such functions. And if the attempt were now made to transform it into a military machine, into a system to carry on war for the purpose of preventing or ending war, I think its fate is sealed. I cannot conceive the Dominions remaining in such a League and pledging themselves to fight the wars of the Old World, and if the Dominions leave it, Great Britain is bound to follow.
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> " I cannot conceive anything more calculated to keep the U.S.A. for ever out of the League than its transformation into a fighting machine, pledged to carry out its decisions by force of arms, if necessary. And remember, the U.S.A. has still to join the League before it will ever be its real self. Membership of the U.S.A. was the assumption on which the League was founded ; defection of the U.S.A. has largely defeated its main objects. And the joining up of the U.S.A. must continue to be the ultimate goal of all true friends of the League and of the cause of peace."

In this context it is interesting to note that the Congress of the United States has within the past fortnight ostentatiously bound the American Government to show no partiality, even in the form of benevolent neutrality, for those who may be called upon to support the League by sanctions in the Abyssinian dispute. There has been much moral reprobation of Italy from the other side of the Atlantic, but that is all. I mention the fact, not in

order to discount the importance of American feeling on issues of this kind—far from it—but because the form which that feeling has taken, namely, reprobation combined with a reassertion of neutrality, plainly emphasizes the truth of General Smuts's argument.

Coming to his second point, General Smuts said that " experience since the inception of the League has in fact taught us the way out ". This was to establish " the principle of limited sanctions, of smaller groups within the League entering into mutual defensive arrangements under the ægis, and subject to the control, of the League ". He pointed to the Treaty of Locarno as an example of what he meant, and concluded :

> " If the fear-obsession in Europe can be removed only by sanctions, then let it be on some such limited basis, and within the circumscribed area of those interested, and not by a departure from the principles of universality and conciliation enshrined for ever in the Covenant. To endeavour to cast out the Satan of fear by calling in the Beelzebub of militarism, and militarizing the League itself, would be a senseless, and indeed fatal, proceeding. Whatever forces are used to support peace must be national, and not League, forces, and must be assembled and employed by mutual defence arrangements of those concerned, made under the general supervision and sanction of the League."

This is clearly a considerable modification of Article XVI.

The Union of South Africa has recently declared through the mouth of its representative in the Assembly of the League its readiness to participate in collective sanctions against Italy, should Italy attack Abyssinia in defiance of the League. It is to be assumed that the Union Government has taken this decision because the Abyssinian question is an African question, and therefore of direct concern to itself. It is clearly not to be assumed that it would undertake any wider, not to say universal, obligation. Not only General Smuts's speech, from which I have quoted, but other declarations by the Prime Minister and other South African Ministers put this beyond doubt.* As for

* Since the above was written, Mr. Pirow, the Minister of Defence in the Union, who is generally regarded as the Prime Minister's most likely successor, has made the following declaration, as reported in *The Times* of September 17 : " I want to make it clear that while we are ready to do our duty by the League of Nations no nation will fire a shot. I am in any case certain that South Africa has no intention of firing a shot. Personally, I believe the war clouds will soon blow over, but whatever happens we will not shoot. We will shoot if attacked, but only if we are attacked."

the other Dominions, there is much to support General Smuts's statement that he " could not conceive of their remaining in a League " which bound its members to apply force against a breach of the Covenant in all parts of the world. I do not think it can be questioned that participation in sanctions would be construed as an " active obligation " by those who framed the Report of the 1930 Imperial Conference. To isolate a country by an economic boycott covering all its external trade is an act of war ; the trade of the Dominions would be necessarily involved in it and would be exposed to retaliation as much as our own. General Smuts, no doubt, had this declaration of the Imperial Conference in mind when he pronounced himself against any universal and automatic liability to resort to sanctions in defence of the Covenant. It goes, I think, without saying that action taken in emergency to defend some vital interest against attack would not be construed as a breach of this understanding or of the Covenant. The Treaty of Locarno makes specific provision for cases of that sort, and the Dominions, though not parties to the Treaty, expressed their satisfaction with it as " a successful contribution to the promotion of the peace of the world ". No one, moreover, who knows the Empire doubts that if this country were endangered by hostile action—in such contingencies, for instance, as the Treaty of Locarno was framed to meet—the Dominions would endorse without hesitation any action found necessary for its defence. But, subject to that limitation, there is no question that we have pledged ourselves to the Imperial Conference not to commit the Dominions without their consent to any action involving an active breach of normal relations with other Powers, and that a pledge to our sister-nations in the Commonwealth is not less binding than our pledge to the League.

To summarize, the newer school of thought upon the League regards it as the repository and guardian of a code of international conduct and as a standing conference of the nations to which all differences between them should be brought. Its duty, this school conceives, is to adjudicate impartially upon such differences in the light of its own code and to use all the resources of peaceful persuasion to prevent any resort to force. But the newer school emphatically rejects the view that the League

should itself impose any obligation upon its members to resort to force, or should indeed do more than sanction the use of force against a breach of its code, should any of its members be called upon to use it by treaties registered with the League or in self-defence against attack. It believes, furthermore, that members of the League should regard themselves as bound not to resort to force as an instrument of national ambition or for any purpose inconsistent with the principles of the Covenant; should use their influence to establish these principles in international relations of every sort; and should thus steadily build up the authority of the League, not as a super-State seeking to put down force with force, but as a centre and focus for all that thought and feeling throughout the world which yearns for a higher code in international life and the outlawry of war. In pursuance of this aim, such local and limited obligations to resort to force as any of its members might undertake between themselves would be registered with the League, governed by its principles, and designed, within the area to which they applied, to make those principles prevail.

I am well aware that many of my friends in the League of Nations Union, and foremost among them Lord Cecil, himself one of the authors of the Covenant, do not accept the doctrine of the newer school. They are for the letter of the Covenant, however much the conditions envisaged at its making may have changed; and they are supported by many influential leaders of opinion, including the Archbishop of York, several prominent Free Churchmen, most (though not all) of the Socialist and Liberal protagonists, and a host of lesser men and women who fill the correspondence columns of the newspapers and claim that national opinion is overwhelmingly on their side. The main contention of this school of thought is that, having put our signature to the Covenant, we shall bring lasting dishonour on ourselves and the League if we fail to implement it in every case. I cannot escape the feeling that those who use this argument are moved by sentiment rather than sense. No one has yet suggested that we are still bound by the Guarantee Pact to France, in view of the fact that it was a joint guarantee signed by ourselves and the United States, and that our co-signatory repudiated it. We have tried to live up to the spirit of that

undertaking by signing the Treaty of Locarno ; but Locarno is a considerable modification of the original Pact. If such a revision of our guarantee to France is justified by the defection of the United States, how can it be otherwise with the much wider guarantees contained in the Covenant, also signed on the understanding that the United States were partners in the undertaking ? General Smuts's whole argument, which I have quoted, is based upon the profound change in the character of the League and of our obligations to it brought about by the American refusal to endorse President Wilson's undertakings, and General Smuts will surely not be accused of infidelity to the spirit of the Covenant. Nor is the view that altered circumstances necessarily and rightly qualify treaty guarantees an upstart doctrine unsupported by precedent. Sir Francis Lindley, a distinguished ambassador, has recently pointed out in *The Times* that it was laid down in precise terms many years ago by Mr. Gladstone and repeated with general acceptance by Sir Edward Grey in the speech, a classic on the subject, which he made to the House of Commons on August 3rd, 1914. If that doctrine be not sound, then we have already grossly failed more than once to honour our obligations under the Covenant—and at no time more conspicuously than in the case of Manchukuo. It can be argued, of course, that we should have done wisely on that occasion to advocate stronger action than we did, but to suggest that by failing to do so we violated our signature to the Covenant is surely an indefensible and irresponsible travesty of the truth. It makes one feel that the only war-mongers alive in this country are those who seek, in General Smuts's words, " to cast out the Satan of fear by the Beelzebub of militarism ". There was never a thing less English than the absolutism of doctrine which these militarists inculcate.

Strangely enough they believe themselves entitled to claim that English opinion is with them by a large majority ; the results of the Peace Ballot carried out by the League of Nations Union are quoted in vindication of that view. This is a very vital matter, for a mistaken reading of public opinion might bring the good faith of our country into shameful disrepute. For myself I do not regard the results of the Ballot as giving any adequate support to the claim that the country is prepared to

accept a universal military obligation to defend the Covenants of the League, because I am convinced that a very large proportion of the answers to Question 5 on sanctions were given without adequate appreciation of what the answers entailed. The subject is, after all, one of very great complexity. To understand all that is involved implies a considerable knowledge of international affairs. My impression is that many voters, when they came to the second part of Question 5, which dealt with sanctions imposed by force of arms, felt themselves out of their depth and incapable of making any definite reply. It is true that 87 per cent. of those who voted answered " yes " to economic sanctions, and that 74 per cent. of those who gave a clear answer said " yes " to military sanctions as well. But I understand that, if abstentions and doubtful answers are reckoned amongst the negatives (a course which is surely prudent in estimating public opinion upon a subject in which our national honour and security may be so deeply involved), the affirmative replies to military sanctions fall to 59 per cent. If to these are added some large proportion (as is certainly proper) of those who did not answer the ballot at all, can we assume from its results that any national majority whatever exists for the principle of more wars to end war or for any universal obligation on those lines? I do not believe it does, and all the more because a very large proportion of those who answered the ballot are certainly members of organizations which have opposed the rearmament of this country on any terms. The country is deeply pacifist. It will, nevertheless, I believe, support rearmament, because the elementary instincts of self-defence which have hitherto always led to rearmament in the nick of time are making themselves felt again. But I do not believe that it is prepared to commit itself to war against war in any and every part of the earth, and I am quite certain that it has no conception that such obligations can be regarded as inherent in its fervent and instinctive support of the principles of the League.

It would be strange indeed if the English mind had been so transformed in half a generation as to commit itself to any logical and universal formulæ, however high the cause. As a people we like to feel our way and to deal with emergencies when and as they occur. The country will, I think, accept

definite obligations to go to war (though most unwillingly) in circumstances that touch it as nearly as those envisaged in the Treaty of Locarno. Those, in any case, have been accepted for it, and the *casus fœderis* is not one in which it is at all likely to fail to respond. But the wider obligations entailed in a strict reading of the Covenant present a whole range of possibilities in which the instinct of the country might at the testing-point turn decisively away. Statesmen who seek to pledge the word of this great democracy further than it is certain to go are playing with the honour of their country ; and there is need to beg for caution when its wonted tenderness for all weaklings with bullies at their throats is apparently to be mistaken for readiness to fight in everyone's quarrels all over the world.

The French Government has already very naturally enquired whether Sir Samuel Hoare's declaration at Geneva means that we will join in collective action against aggression in Central and Eastern Europe, should that occur. Are we to interpret the " interest " which is all that we have yet proclaimed in Austrian independence as involving that definite guarantee ? No answer has yet been given by the Government ; but Mr. Lloyd George has hastened to warn it against any fresh commitments of that kind. Whatever, therefore, the answer, the enquiry is pertinent. If France is to join us in threatening sanctions against Italy, the Duce may very well respond by coming to terms with his fellow-dictator in Germany. Germany's power in Europe must in any case be greatly enhanced, and the League may find itself in substance an alliance of only three Great Powers out of seven, with three others definitely hostile to it and the seventh obstinately neutral, whatever may befall. I do not know what the Government's answer will be ; but whether it be definite or indefinite, the Abyssinian crisis has brought in sight a realignment of European Powers which makes it more imperative than ever that we should have strength to discharge our Locarno obligations with decisive effect.

Whatever else may be the moral of the present emergency, that stands written in letters of fire. The Abyssinian crisis would never have swelled to its present dangerous proportions if we had been strong. There would have been no such truculence in Italy and no such cruel embarrassment for France.

The dilemma in which we now find ourselves—on the one side, humiliation; on the other, an imminent risk of weakening the foundations of European peace and even of immediate war—would never have occurred. All parties are to blame for the persistent optimism, amounting to indolence and folly, which has plunged us into this predicament. Surely all may now agree to re-establish Britain's position without a moment's avoidable delay. If immediate peace hangs on anything, it hangs on that; and if the peace of Europe is broken in present conditions, the League, with much else, will sink into the abyss.

If, on the other hand, we rearm to the level of our obligations at the high speed which our financial and other resources put easily within our reach, the League will survive any temporary setback which it may suffer from the Abyssinian *impasse*. What matters is that the Powers which believe in League principles should be strong amongst the nations, not that the League itself should be armed with material force. The English people are still as far as all other peoples from giving their allegiance to a super-State with power to impose its decrees by ordering its members to war. The yearning of European civilization for a moral centre, a tribunal above the clouds of national jealousy and distrust, to which it can carry its griefs, has persisted ever since the fall of the Roman Empire. The League is its latest embodiment, and there is greater moral power behind it than ever before. But we shall shatter the Kingdom of Heaven if we set out to take it by violence; we shall destroy the League if we seek to enthrone its authority by force. It is better to be strong ourselves and to act up to its principles despite our strength than to lean upon it and to look to it to make good our lack of strength. It is better, moreover, to spread its principles by example, by removing grievances which we can help to remove, by making sacrifices which we can afford to make, than by seeking to force those principles by superior strength down unwilling throats. General Smuts is, I am convinced, profoundly right in urging the League to beware of setting force against force. History lends itself to morals of many sorts; but I suggest that the League has something to learn from the history of the Papacy under Innocent III. The Vatican at the outset of that pontificate had a moral hold upon Europe which

might have been developed with beneficent results. Under it St. Francis founded his Order and preached a universal change of heart. Under it St. Dominic sent his begging friars from town to town through the length and breadth of Europe to preach submission to the Holy See. Even so today our religious leaders are urging the nations to a change of heart. Even so today the League of Nations Union is sending its friars to every city and hamlet within its reach to spread submission to the Geneva law.

> "The men of the thirteenth century" (writes the Warden of New College in his *History of Europe*) "were agreed on the principles of a seat of authority in religion, a supreme spiritual arbiter in temporal affairs, an institution professing the rule of sanctity and justice, an ultimate tribunal before which they might lay their causes. The great multiplication of appeals in the Papal Curia under Innocent III is proof that the Roman Court met the needs of the time. Against all manner of local tyannies and oppressions there was in the last resort an appeal to Rome."

The dream of a central conscience, a supreme moral arbiter for Christendom, was, however, shattered within Pope Innocent's time, and shattered, I believe, mainly because he grasped at the shadow of temporal power. All Christendom was to be united in the Fourth Crusade and the power of Islam finally overthrown; but the organization of that Crusade only turned Christendom against itself, and the high adventure ended in the sack of Byzantium, the intensification of schism, and the weakening of faith in the only authority which could furnish the nations with moral leadership at that date. Europe was not prepared for a political theocracy claiming temporal in addition to spiritual power. History can, I know, be quoted to support any theme; but I am convinced that there is a lesson for modern Christendom in that tragedy of six centuries ago. If the parallel be true in any sense, the moral to be drawn from it is clear. Let the League, it warns us, judge the causes which are brought to it without fear or favour, but let it not seek other than moral authority to further its principles and aims. Above all, let it not organize crusades against its enemies, or bind the nations to ensue peace and justice by making war. It will never by such means defeat its enemies; it will only defeat itself.

ITALY'S ECONOMIC PROBLEM

By C. J. S. Sprigge

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Apart from any embarrassments that may be occasioned by economic sanctions, or by a boycott on the part of other trading countries, Italy's projected Abyssinian war raises for her the problem of how to pay, in foreign markets, for the indispensable imports necessary both for peace and for war purposes; and also that of remunerating those on military service, and engaged in the production of war supplies, who are accordingly not contributing to the output of the food, clothing and other necessaries which they are consuming. For even a relatively circumscribed Italo-Abyssinian war must require the maintenance under arms, in colonies some thousand miles from the home country, of hundreds of thousands of men for whom food, clothing and such shelter as military life allows of must be provided. Meanwhile, assuming the war to be successfully circumscribed, the home country is likely to be maintained none the less in a high state of military preparedness, with large garrisons in frontier regions and concentration of troops around the great ports.

A nation which resolves or is induced to undertake a war as a transcendant aim reveals unsuspected strengths—and weaknesses—and emerges with traditions and habits modified in a manner entirely unforeseen. The late C. E. Montague, in his classic *Disenchantment*, described how a brilliant journalist, who had been watching this country's affairs from a vantage-point for the quarter century up to 1914, learned in the next four years that what the well-informed had always regarded as impossible was possible; old-established trades could be taken over and run by Government clerks, while the heads of businesses were learning to form fours, or dying in France.

Professor Pigou, in a classic of a different sort (*The Political Economy of War*) has tracked down the multiple sources of the additional factors of production that can be brought into the working system when it is co-ordinated for the supreme purpose of war. Since 1914 it has been rash to put forward as the measure of a country's economic capacity for war that of its economic capacity in peace-time.

Yet, while a Government undertaking a war assumes a large share in the control of all the property of its citizens or subjects, and can override their protests against its exposure to risk, no Government can make any change in the property rights of those beyond its sway—except by defaulting on debts ; and even that it cannot do more than once—until the injured creditor has accorded a further credit. The belligerent Government is unable to obtain additional wealth from abroad without paying for it with cash or trustworthy promises to pay—unless, indeed, it can elicit gifts or credits on special terms from allies or supporters. Italy, at the present juncture, can look for no such assistance, but must reckon to have to pay on commercial terms for all foreign supplies, even assuming that markets are not closed against her by political decisions.

Italy's war preparations are, for that matter, too far advanced for these things to be regarded as mere possible future developments. The political economy of war is already in working order. The Duce has lately referred to 200,000 Italian rifles in East Africa, ready to fire on a word of command. According to the able and privileged correspondent of *Le Temps* with the Italian forces, more than 120,000 soldiers and workmen were disembarked at Massawa between February and August, while General Graziani's force in Somaliland has been estimated at 60,000. The *Temps* correspondent, writing in mid-August, thus describes the arrival at Massawa :

> One hundred and twenty thousand men with all the artillery, engineering equipment, air and motor transport, and defence apparatus that a modern army carries with it : guns, aeroplanes, tanks, lorries, motors, horses, mules, harness, munitions, petrol, oil, barbed wire—and that is not all. Such an army cannot be sustained on local produce. Indeed, except for a certain amount of meat, everything else required must be brought from Italy : corn, rice, cereals, vegetables, fruit, oil, cheese, wine, tents, bedding, timber, and even straw and hay for the beasts of burden. Rome has determined that the army should lack absolutely nothing.

One may suppose that the smaller army in Somaliland is being similarly cared for.* But perhaps the *Temps* correspondent has slipped in making the whole of these requirements arrive from Italy. Large direct shipments to the Italian colonies are signalled from countries east and south of Suez.

Not only do the Italian colonies afford no local sustenance to these armies: the port equipment and the roads for their reception and their distribution had to be improvised. Ten thousand workmen, through the torrid summer, have worked on the enlargement and organization of the port of Massawa, and its nearer communications; another fifteen thousand on the roadways and railway up from the low coast to the plateau of Asmara. Two thousand of these have, for reasons of ill-health or distress, been returned to Italy. Those working in the hottest regions are paid nearly £1 a day (50 lire), and the normal is about 10s. a day. On these figures, for which the authority is once again M. Gentizon of the *Temps*, the pay-roll for the special workers in Eritrea alone must have totalled £500,000 monthly. The pay of the ordinary soldier on service in the colony is 5 lire, or 1s. 8d. a day. The victualling is not (following M. Gentizon) skimpy: two substantial meals a day are provided. The medical and hospital arrangements are abundant and elaborate—despite which 150 of the special workers have died during the summer.

The equipment and provisioning of the Eritrea and Somaliland armies and the accelerated consumption of raw materials by the Italian factories has required the purchase of special supplies in many parts of the world. Thus in New York purchases have been effected of fresh and canned foodstuffs, cotton, machine tools, special steels, and of scrap iron in far more than normal quantities (reported in *Temps*, September 9th). In Turkey, 4,000,000 lbs. of cheap tobacco were lately taken for the expeditionary force, and large quantities of vegetables and fodder (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, September 5th). In Southern Spain there were orders for canned fish to a value of millions of pesetas (*Temps*, September 5th); in Poland orders are being

* A correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* (Sept. 16th) reveals that the rations of the Somaliland army are better; he gives some details for both the expeditionary forces.

discussed for some 300,000 or more blankets (*The Times*, September 6th), and have been actually given for 300,000 packages of meat preserves (United Press message). In Czechoslovakia canned foods have been ordered to a value of 50 million crowns, or sufficient to keep the industry at work till the end of the year (*Temps*, September 9th). From Rumania, in the first six months of the year, Italy purchased 711,000 tons of oil products against 440,000 tons a year previously. German exports of coal to Italy in July 1935 were for 601,000 tons, against 453,000 and 223,000 in July 1934 and 1933 respectively. Czechoslovakia is for the first time beginning to ship coal to Italy. Austrian exports to Italy in the first half of 1935 were equivalent to two-thirds of the previous total year's exports.

Already, then, Italy has had to cope with extraordinary expenditure in foreign markets, where goods are to be procured only for cash or on freely accorded credits. If the authorities quoted above are reliable, Italy has obtained a small part of the special supplies in the U.S.A. on credit, against promise of trading concessions, and has also obtained long credit terms for the purchase of coal from Germany. In the early part of the year some £2,000,000 of credit was, if not formally granted, yet willy-nilly conceded by British merchants who are now by that much short of due payment for their supplies. However, for the great bulk of foreign purchases Italy must expect to have to pay cash, meaning the currency of the selling country, or gold, or some internationally acceptable currency like sterling or dollars. Now, where are the authorities of the Bank of Italy and the Finance Ministry going to obtain these currencies to make them available to the actual purchasers of foreign goods? (And here it may be remarked that the individual Italian merchant has long been disappearing to make way for governmental offices as the purchasers in foreign markets. In the grain markets all Italian purchasing orders are from a single buyer: and soon for coal, metals, and other commodities it will be the same.)

Can Italy earn foreign currencies to finance special war purchases out of the proceeds of Italian exports of merchandize, and the sale of services to foreigners (such as shipping and hospitality to tourists)? A hard task indeed if out of

such ordinary income receipts, Italy has lately been unable to finance ordinary peace-time purchases of foreign goods. Italy has, in peace time, month by month (without any exception since 1932), imported up to more than the value of the simultaneous exports. In the six months January to June 1935 the excess value of imports was 1,368 million lire (£23,000,000 approximately at the official exchange rate), and in the first half of the previous four years it was 1,432 millions, 811 millions, and 1,254 millions respectively. For the whole year 1934 the value of imports exceeded that of exports by over 2,400 millions, or £40,000,000 ; the excess in 1933, 1932 and 1931 had been about 1,400 millions in each year.

" Visible " exports are not, of course, the only means of a country acquiring foreign currency. There are also net gains to be earned from shipping and from tourist traffic, and there may be net receipts from foreign investments, or from the remittances of emigrants to their families.

In fairly recent years Italy's annual earnings of foreign currency were thought to include about 1,000 millions from shipping, 2,000 millions from tourist expenditure, and 2,000 millions from emigrants' remittances, or 5,000 million lire in all—a figure amply outweighing an excess import at the present rate of some 2,700 millions a year. But this estimate of 5,000 millions, representing the rate of annual earnings from 1928 to 1930, was already written down by its author to 2,400 millions for 1932, and must almost certainly be further sharply reduced for 1935. In war conditions tourists' expenditure in Italy will be a minimum ; and while emigrants might possibly under a patriotic impulse, especially in view of the improved business conditions in North and South America, remit larger sums to the home country, the earnings of Italian shipping services to foreigners must be reduced to very little. (Perhaps it is a sign that while Italian purchases from Turkey have lately been exceptionally large, Italian shipping in Turkish ports has been exceptionally small.—*Frankfurter Zeitung*, September 5th.)

Thus Italy seems to have no prospect of earning, from export trade at the present rate and from the other sources of foreign currency earnings, the wherewithal to pay for extraordinary imports in the course of the next year or two, in addition to

ordinary imports at the recent rate. Evidently either total imports must be compressed to the equivalent value of exports, (including " invisible " items) or credits must be raised, or the additional expenditure in foreign markets be met out of reserves.

The available reserves are the gold and foreign exchange holdings of the Bank of Italy, stocks of silver, and foreign securities and bank balances taken over by the Italian authorities from Italian owners under recent decrees.

Under the normal regulations of the Bank of Italy a 40 per cent reserve of gold and of foreign currency exchangeable into gold must be held against the note circulation and short liabilities. But on July 21st last this regulation was suspended, and the reserve, which is now considerably less than this minimum, is thus at the Government's disposal for making foreign payments. It amounts to 4,704 million lire of gold (£51,000,000 sovereigns or £77,000,000 at present exchange) and 438 millions of exchange (£7,000,000 at present exchange), that is some £85,000,000 in all. In June the Government replaced the silver coinage with paper money, acquiring stocks of silver worth some £6,000,000. At the end of 1934 a census was ordered of foreign exchange and securities held by Italians, and these have since been commandeered to constitute a further reserve. The authorities are said to have discovered that the full equivalent of the diminution of the Bank of Italy's reserves between 1933 and 1935, that is about 2,000 million lire, had been invested by Italians in foreign securities, so that the authorities should have regained control of some £33,000,000 of foreign resources. But, to a very great extent, these " foreign " securities were Italian bonds purchased at a discount on the foreign, and notably on the New York market, where some $350 millions of Italian bonds had been issued since 1927. The value of these bonds is undoubtedly much less than at the time of investment. For example, the dollar bond issue of the Fiat Motor Co. was quoted $100 at the beginning of 1934, $84 last April, $60 on September 10th, 1934 ; Montecatini $98, $89, $70 respectively, and so on. Foreign loans in foreign currency subscribed in Italy from 1923 to 1932 amounted to some £4,000,000 in all—an indication that Italian " foreign " investment in other than Italian dollar bonds is very small. The Italian reserve of

spending power for excess imports can hardly, one concludes, amount to very much more than £100,000,000 in all, in so far as it is made up of the Bank of Italy's reserves, the silver coinage and the commandeered foreign securities. The Italian State and other Italian debtors are meanwhile indebted to foreign creditors for a sum, not large in comparison with other countries' foreign debts, but large in comparison with these reserves. However the great bulk of this debt is due only some years hence, and the annual service is no very great addition to the import Bill.

At what rate, now, must the Italian authorities expect to have to draw on these reserves? Given the present published import and export values, which leave an import excess of 2,700 million lire, and allowing, conjecturally, an annual Italian income of 1,500 million lire from tourism, shipping, and remittances, drawings must be at the rate of 1,200 million lire or £20,000,000 a year. But can the published import excess be accepted as the effective total? Apparently not, since (as is pointed out by the conscientious Rome correspondent of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, August 20th) the published exports include Italian exports to Eritrea and Somaliland, and the imports do not include the direct imports of those colonies abroad. In other words the net imports of these colonies directly from abroad and indirectly, through Italy, from abroad, are apparently an unregistered addition to the liabilities being incurred by Italy in present trade relations. And such imports (as was suggested earlier in this article) have been of great importance.

The drain on the reserves must, then, be very rapid—enough, perhaps, to annihilate them in two to three years—unless Italian export and import values can be more evenly balanced. To achieve this is the purpose of various measures of import control, and of propaganda against superfluous imports, and in favour of the replacement of hitherto necessary imports by new lines of domestic production. Early in 1935 imports from each foreign country were in principle limited to about one-third of the imports in the corresponding weeks of 1934. Admission of further imports has been by concession, established in a new series of trade treaties. The control has been further tightened in the summer months, and the Italian importer now requires

a licence for every shipment (or series of shipments) from abroad.

What are the possibilities of import restriction? It may be a fairly easy matter to cut off one or two luxury imports, such as furs, against which a propaganda was let loose early this year. But half of the total Italian imports in 1934 were of raw materials, among which the national requirement of cotton, coal, fuel oils, and the chief metals had to be covered almost entirely from foreign supplies. Attempts are being made, attempts certainly strenuous and to a limited extent successful, to develop local coal resources, and to replace mineral with vegetable oils, and foreign fibres with local hemp and artificial threads. Large traction vehicles are being converted to running on gasogene (wood alcohol), and a recent announcement of a Government organ held out the promise of " complete self-sufficiency in liquid fuel in the case of war, by utilization of domestic and agricultural and mining wealth " (*Corriere della Sera*, February 24th). These and similar predictions regarding textile self-sufficiency are to be judged in relation to both the difficulty of rapid transformations of technique, and, as an offsetting consideration, the unexampled powers of a modern Government taking over and centralizing the work of whole industries.

Foodstuffs are a much smaller class of Italian import, since the wheat output, in the last ten years, was stimulated with the deliberate, and by now very largely achieved, aim of growing the whole of Italy's breadstuffs on Italian soil. The authors of a recent memorandum published by the Royal Institute of International Affairs (*The Economic and Financial Position of Italy*, 2nd Ed., August, 1935) suggest that " Italy could feed herself at a pinch ". But it would, indeed, be a pinch. In a recent year rather more than half of the beef and veal consumed in Italy was imported, and even so, consumption per head is little more than a quarter of the British, and less than half of the French. The *Journal of the Italian Commission on Nutrition* has lately insisted upon the inadequacy of meat in the Italian dietary. Finally, Italy imports manufactures for about the same value as the imports of raw materials, and to about the same value, also, as the exports of manufactures. Here, no doubt, a great effort to restrain purchasers is being made: but how is it to be avoided that other countries, unable to sell

the customary manufactures to Italy, should take measures against the admission of Italian goods ?

Even in the present world trade conditions the achievement might be possible, and Italy might thus succeed in earning a net income of foreign exchange from a surplus export of manufactures, if the Italian exporter could offer goods at advantageous prices. But with the single exception of chemical products, all classes of products in the Bachi wholesale price index list were, by June 1935, substantially dearer than earlier in the year. The general index was 308 (June) against 277 (January) and 272 (January 1934). And this is not surprising, seeing that the index for industrial production was more than 25 per cent. above that of a year earlier, with activity in the shipyards and in the engineering works some 45 per cent. over the previous year. The Duce himself has not concealed, but has publicly advertised the fact, that the factories were working night and day for purposes of war preparation. The Government has come in, as it does always in wartime, to be a powerful and privileged competitor for raw materials and labour power, leaving other consumers to get themselves served as best they can. Cheap production is possible only by the enlistment of relatively underpaid labour. Nobody who has studied Prof. Pigou on the Political Economy of War will doubt but that a really powerful Government can discover for the industries female and juvenile labour, and overtime workers, to replace the adult workers called away : but at the cost of a change, if not of an acute degeneration, of social and educational standards. But this examination must now conclude with the opinion that in fact the difficulty of paying for essential imports will, in case of war, be very great, and that the Italian people will have to revise their already modest views of what is or is not essential. Or else their rulers will have to change their view of world affairs. For Italy enters the war, perhaps, with great moral reserves, but singularly small economic reserves.

War without some inflation, some diminution in the real value of money is hardly thinkable, and already in the rise in prices, the expansion of the note circulation, the depreciation of Government securities, this process can easily be detected. After all, a country which could suddenly call one fifth of its

male population to arms and hundreds of thousands more to armaments, and yet maintain its previous standard of living unimpaired, would be demonstrating that, up to then, it had been taking life exceedingly easily, and not doing nearly all that it could to increase its wealth and welfare. No doubt the intelligent Italian people well know that war must mean much harder times: the question is whether the Duce can call out new efforts, and redistribute property rights and privileges, so as to set off against the inevitable loss of aggregate wealth, some measure of better economic balance, and of credible promises for a more prosperous future. That is what his followers hope to see.

EPITAPH ON GEORGE MOORE

By Charles Morgan

GEORGE MOORE was born on February 24th, 1852 and died in Ebury Street on January 21st, 1933. He was old and aloof; he belonged to no clique; his habit of publishing his work in limited editions had for many years restricted public knowledge of him. When he was taken to Golders Green on his way to burial in Ireland, a few great painters followed him; the Prime Minister, a Nonconformist and a Socialist, found it in his heart and in his honour to do this last duty to a pagan aristocrat who was dead; but English literature abstained. That neglect is surprising, for Moore wrote an autobiography that is entitled to rank with the *Confessions* of Rousseau, and, in his version of *Daphnis and Chloë*, a modern translation from an ancient writer which stands with Pater's and with Adlington's translation of *The Golden Ass*. His *Avowals*, however sharply one may dissent from his judgment of such men as Tolstoy, to whom he was temperamentally opposed, is a landmark in the history of criticism, even what we may consider its errors having a vitality and an independence more valuable than the safer compromises of other men. All this is but a small part of his achievement. Twice George Moore recreated the English novel—first in 1894, when *Esther Waters* gave us our liberty, and again ten years later when there began that series of tales, extending from *The Lake* through *The Brook Kerith* to *Aphrodite in Aulis*, in which we may discover, if we will, a new cadence and discipline, a new reconciliation between the written and the spoken word.

II

These are the attainments of the artist. The man was not less remarkable. Several years before his death he invited me to study with him to be his biographer, and so appointed me in

his will. Among his reasons for this was his desire that his biography should be, not a " tombstone in two volumes ", but, as he said, " a true novel "—a story of his life based, as far as was humanly possible, upon a novelist's complete knowledge and intuitive understanding of his subject, and told with that indifference to all but æsthetic consequence by which a story-teller is fortified. To write such a book it would be necessary for me to see him as he had seen himself at different times of his life, " for ", he said, " the story you have to tell is not of a man who wrote this book or that ; anyone can criticize my work, and better in a hundred years than now. Your story is of a man who made himself because he imagined himself, and you must discover—just as we discover when we are telling a story—when his imagination went with his nature and when against it. For it is that which, in the end, determines a narrative's shape. The man you will tell of imagined himself as an artist ; he went to Paris to become an artist ; but when he imagined himself as a painter, the imagination was sterile, like a man mated with the wrong woman, and it was not until he threw away his brushes that his imagination paired with his nature".

He told me that the most valuable existing source, outside his own memory and his autobiographical writings, was a certain series of letters addressed by him to a single correspondent. It would not be necessary to publish them ; indeed, better not, for his letters were bad, he said ; nothing that he wrote was of value unless it was revised ; but without knowledge of these letters it would not be possible for me to have complete knowledge of my subject. He made me known to this correspondent, and asked that access to all the letters should be permitted to me. It was refused. I at once offered to resign my task as biographer, thinking that the refusal might be personal to me, and that by my withdrawal the project itself might be saved. Moore would not permit me to resign ; he asked if I was prepared to take the risk of labour wasted—a risk that he did not believe to be great. If we were patient, the decision of his correspondent would, he thought, be changed by time and by a request to be made in his will. " But if it does not change ? " I asked. " Then the book you and I have imagined ", he answered, " cannot be written".

After his death and the publication of his will I renewed my request. It was again refused. In these circumstances I had no alternative but to abandon the biography. Another Life of Moore is to be written, with the consent of his literary executor, by Mr. Joseph Hone, who is not bound by my special and personal pledges. It was necessary that the French and Irish sources should be investigated without delay, and Mr. Hone's work has all my good will. It is, indeed, one of the purposes of this essay to make available to him a distillation of such part of my material as is not left dangerously incomplete by my ignorance of the correspondence withheld from me. I am saddened by the death of my own work, but I do not complain of the action that has caused it. Private letters are private letters, even though they be written by great men ; as long as they are not destroyed against posterity, their owner's present right to withhold them is not, I think, to be questioned.

I have ventured to make this digression that none may suppose me to have lightly regarded or willingly laid aside the honour that George Moore granted to me. Several years of work have been forfeited—a forfeit that no writer pays without a struggle. I took my decision in what I believe to be fidelity to his charge, preferring to write no book than a tentative or doubtful one. Release of the correspondence may, if it is complete, prove me to have been unduly cautious ; if incomplete, it will prove nothing. Meanwhile I had no other guide than George Moore's own estimate of its biographical importance, and by this I have felt myself to be bound. These circumstances will explain why, in writing now of Moore, I shall use sometimes language more personal than would be appropriate to an essay in criticism. His work must be spoken of, for his final claim lies there ; but though I shall attempt to indicate its general significance and to tell something of how it was written, I shall make no ordered and particular analysis of it. Others may do that ; the endurance of his art will assuredly give them time enough. The value of my testimony is that I knew him, day in, day out, during his last years, and in a relationship which, because I was less than half his age and so was detached from his former controversies, enabled him to speak to me sometimes " out of his part ", as he might not have been able to speak even to his oldest friends.

III

What first created a bond between us was, I think, my reply to a question of his, put to me one evening as we walked up South Eaton Place. We had been discussing Balzac and his saying (which, I see, has been restored to a different original in the latest edition of his correspondence) that he had but two desires—*être célèbre et être aimé*. Moore asked me what in life interested me most. " Once", he said, " I asked a woman that question, and she answered ' Geology '. She had seemed a pretty woman, but after that answer our story ended before it was well begun. All husbands would be safe if they persuaded their wives to answer, ' Geology '. But tell me ", he added, " what is your answer to the question " ?

I replied that three things interested me above all others : art, love, and death. " Ah", he said, " that should provide us with subjects for conversation ! I should ask you first why they interest you more than—shall we say flowers and horses, which are both interesting subjects ".

" Because ", I said, " I think of them always as three aspects of the same impulse ".

" Of what impulse ? "

" The impulse to re-create oneself."

" Is death that ? " he said. " It would be pleasant to wake up and find that, after all, death was only art and love in a different form. You must be a very happy man, my dear friend, or a very sad one. But why do you say : ' art, love, and death ' ? Why not : ' art, women, and religion ' ? "

" Because ", I said, " they are not the same ".

" No ", he answered, " they are not the same, but one must make a phrase. ' Art, love, and death', sounds like a picture by Watts ; one cannot go through life being interested in a picture by Watts", and, as we entered Sloane Square, he began to describe the picture that Watts would have painted.

We had this conversation before he invited me to be his biographer. I did not make my note of it while he was speaking or even the same night, as my later habit was ; I made it some time afterwards, but I do not doubt its verbal accuracy, for, while I wrote, an image of Moore's long face, the face of a fiery sheep, turned to me under his bowler hat while he exclaimed : " Is

death that ? " was fresh in my mind, and is as fresh today. I have often wondered since whether my speaking of man's everlasting desire to re-create himself, to die in the old self and be born again, was the cause of his having chosen me to write his Life. Like a fool, I did not ask him. Certainly I have never known a man in whom the impulse to renew himself was so strong and continuous.

IV

This passion of George Moore's for self-renewal would have been the theme of the biography that I might have written. It is, I think, a universal impulse, influencing all our lives, but it took in him a peculiar form and had peculiar consequences. In men of even temperament who are fortunate enough to have found a natural outlet for their powers, it appears as a continuous growth of their character and craftsmanship. When they become men, they put away childish things—at any rate from their active consciousness. Their advance may be likened to the ascent of a ladder ; the rungs they have passed are not encountered again. A painter paints in one manner when he is twenty, in another at forty, in a third at sixty-five. The latest manner may or may not be better than the earliest—that is not the point. The point is that the change, when made, is complete and final. When the mature painter approaches a fresh canvas, he does not find that the young man of twenty is standing before it, and that, even while he is painting a mature masterpiece, this young man continually snatches his brush from him and must be disciplined anew before maturity can have its effect. This is what happened to George Moore.

The plainest and most concrete example of it is to be found in his method of composition. In his later years he worked by dictating to shorthand. The passage was typed, read by him, and, to some extent, revised with the pen. Then he would go to his secretary again and, with the typed draft on his knee, redictate, not only elaborating and expanding as Balzac did in proof, but often using the draft for no more than a sentence or two and giving to his secretary, who was sometimes distracted by his drifting to and fro, what was in effect a new draft unconnected with the old. The process was then repeated, and

repeated again and again, the structure of the story itself as well as the forms of expression being built up as the revisions continued. If we heard that this method was used by another writer, we should be tempted to say that his purpose was infirm, that he was garrulous merely, and that only chaos could result. It is, in fact, responsible for certain long digressions which I cannot but think were structural flaws in George Moore's later work and which gave to *Aphrodite in Aulis* an unmistakable air of having been written by a very old man. In brief, the method had its defects even under his stern control; but to say that infirmity of purpose was responsible for it is completely to misunderstand his special difficulties and his method of overcoming them.

Sometimes I was able to see his very early drafts. They were a revelation of the writer and the man. They were not the imperfect beginnings of work that was recognizably a master's. A passage would open with excellent quietness and dignity. Here, in the rough, one exclaimed, is prose as memorable as any in *The Brook Kerith*! Then, suddenly, a sentence would appear that seemed to have been interpolated by some flashy writer of novelettes for the lesser magazines of the 'eighties. These drafts could be bad with a virulent badness, with a pretentiousness, a snobbery, a sentimentality, a seemingly hopeless incompetence which, if one had not known that the genius of Moore was waiting to redeem them, would have tempted one to say that they and their writer were beyond redemption. Who wrote them? Not Homer, however disastrously he might nod. Their authorship is to be discovered in a collection of stories, one signed "George Moore", which, under the general title of *Wine, Women and Nuts*, is on the shelves of the British Museum. It is probably to be detected likewise in his contributions, which I have not investigated, to his brother, Augustus Moore's magazine, *The Hawk*. It is certainly to be perceived again and again in certain passages of *A Modern Lover*, his first novel dated 1883, which afterwards became *Lewis Seymour and Some Women*. The astonishing and significant thing is the persistence of the unregenerate Moore. To the very end of that long life, he had to be tutored and whipped and expurgated. He was for ever popping up, seizing the pen and writing non-

sense. In every book he wrote George Moore went through the whole process of self-renewal; he went back to the beginning and taught himself to write all over again. If for a moment his watchfulness slackened, something clearly written not by him, but by that awkward youth, his predecessor, would reach the printer—perhaps even the public. Then the book had to be re-written, and, if all re-writing failed, to be excluded from the canon.

In a preface to a final edition of *The Lake*, Moore himself speaks of this besetting adolescence:

> "I will confess", he says, "to very little admiration for *Evelyn Innes* and *Sister Teresa*. The writing of *Evelyn Innes* and *Sister Teresa* was useful to me inasmuch as that if I had not written them I could not have written *The Lake* or *The Brook Kerith*. It seems ungrateful, therefore, to refuse to allow two of my most successful books into the canon merely because they do not correspond with my æstheticism. But a writer's æstheticism is his all; he cannot surrender it, for his art is dependent upon it, and the single concession he can make is that if an overwhelming demand should arise for these books when he is among the gone—a storm before which the reed must bend—the publisher shall be permitted to print *Evelyn Innes* and *Sister Teresa* from the original editions, it being, however, clearly understood that they are offered to the public only as apocrypha. But this permission must not be understood to extend to certain books on which my name appears—viz., *Mike Fletcher*, *Vain Fortune*, *Parnell and His Island*; to some plays, *Martin Luther*, *The Strike at Arlingford*, *The Bending of the Bough*; to a couple of volumes of verse entitled *Pagan Poems* and *Flowers of Passion*—all these books, if they are ever reprinted again, should be issued as the work of a disciple—Amico Moorini I put forward as a suggestion".

Amico Moorini, then, shall be his name, but he was very far from being George Moore's disciple or his friend. He was his enemy who, though beaten down a thousand times, always rose up from under his feet; and it was this struggle which gave to his character the stress of an extreme complexity.

V

In some respects, George Moore was still an adolescent even in his old age; in some, a figure of comedy that swung continually towards farce; but in his devotion to his art, and his readiness to sacrifice all else to it, he was saint or devil, according to your prejudice. To study him and his work was to be instructed in the innermost meaning and penalties of

self-discipline and self-creation. Self-creation was the end, self-discipline the means, and the penalty he had to pay for this everlasting labour of the spirit, compelling the man he had been to bring forth the man he would become, was an exhaustion of the vital energy given by others to the joy, the ease, the warmth, the natural humanity of living. It was precisely this that caused so many acquaintances to feel that there was in him something chill and snakelike ; they knew him only when he was on his guard, when Amico Moorini was at his elbow. The limp hand, the sloping shoulders, the pale, almost creaseless face ; the eyes that were sometimes vacant and sometimes the eyes of a hawk, filled many observers with profound unease. There were times in which they felt that he was naturally cruel ; they experienced a physical repulsion ; and, as though they were engaged with a creature not of their own kind, were reluctant that his hand should touch theirs. It needed more than superficial knowledge of him to understand that his cruelty was for himself.

Impressions of this sort always have their date in his middle or later life, never in his youth. They appear in contemporary accounts of him after his writing of *Esther Waters* and generally later still, when he had passed his fiftieth year and had written *The Lake* and that volume so significantly named : *Memoirs of My Dead Life*. Amico Moorini himself appears to have been by no means a repulsive young man. One who knew Moore when he was young and remained his friend until her death a few years ago, said that, though ugly, he was always " exciting and amusing ". Mr. Shaw, who knew him in his very early days in London, described him to me in a conversation, of which I have a note, containing this illuminating passage :

> Shaw said he knew Moore when he lived in Cecil Street, Strand. He seldom, if ever, saw George and Augustus together. " There was always a certain delicacy about George, and he knew how to be a gentleman when he wanted to. He was always telling stories about himself and women. In every story there was a room full of mirrors and chandeliers, and the story usually ended with some woman throwing a lamp at George and driving him out of the house. Everybody used to laugh at George and no one believed him, but he had an imperturbable good humour, and if you said : ' But, George, don't talk such nonsense, you are making it all up ', he was not in the least put out or angry, but just said : ' Don't interrupt me ', and went on as before".

Shaw added that, after this early knowledge of Moore, he lost sight of him for a time, " until one day Archer came to me and said he had been reading a most wonderful naturalistic book by a new writer. It was called *A Mummer's Wife*. 'But who is the writer'? I asked. 'Well', said Archer, 'his name is George Moore'. 'Nonsense!' I said. 'But I *know* George Moore. He couldn't possibly write a real book. He couldn't possibly do anything.' But there it was. He had written it, and then I began to understand the incredible industry of the man".

This was in 1884, ten years before the publication of *Esther Waters*, Moore being then thirty-two. Mr. Shaw speaks of his " imperturbable good humour ". The general impression is of a foolish, rather flashy man about town, an affable and outwardly ineffectual creature who only in solitude was beginning to lay the foundations of his artistic life. There is no hint here of anything abnormally cold or aloof, still less of a cultivated inhumanity; and I do not doubt that the contemporary impression is just.

Contrast with it an account, by Mr. Ford Madox Ford, of a meeting with George Moore in his maturity. It appeared in an essay on Moore and Galsworthy, contributed by Mr. Ford to *The Atlantic Monthly* soon after their deaths.

I have that early image of him (Mr. Ford writes) standing rather rigid and grim, chilled and monachal in his long dressing-gown. He was dismissing me with one hand on the door-knob of his dim, overheated room. I had at the moment for the first time the impression of his extreme pallor. That was owing, possibly, to a shaft of light coming from the passage. And he seemed as aloof as if he had been a denizen of another world where there was neither sun nor wind. The impression was so strong that I was relieved that he did not remove his hand from the door knob and offer it to me.

Mr. Ford hazards the opinion that it was, perhaps, George Moore's aloofness from life that led to his being so often omitted from critical discussion, although there was not a critic " with any pretensions to knowledge of letters who would not acknowledge when challenged that Moore was infinitely the most skilful man of letters of his day—the most skilful in the whole world ". Then Mr. Ford describes how a friend of his, speaking of Galsworthy, said:

" He wasn't, at least, wicked like George Moore . . ." Then he checked and exclaimed almost in mental distress: " I don't know why I say that George Moore was wicked. I know nothing against him personally. I have never heard anything against him, and *The Brook Kerith* is one of the most beautiful books in the world. But you know what I mean . . ."

> I knew what he meant (Mr. Ford continues). It was that something wicked seemed to distil itself from the pages of Moore's books so that whilst you read them you felt, precisely, mental distress. You felt even mentally distressed at merely remembering the writings of George Moore—as if you were making acquaintance of what goes on in the mind behind the glacial gaze of the serpent that is the Enemy of Man.

Mr. Ford's choice of words is, perhaps, over-spectacular. Certainly I was never aware in George Moore of anything that could be appropriately described as " the glacial gaze of the serpent that is the Enemy of Man " ; he was too often pathetic and too often ridiculous for that. Nor can anyone who knew Moore intimately do anything but smile at the use of the word " wicked " in connection with him. He could be as wilful as a child and as impatient as a shrew. I have seen him march into a chemist's shop where he was unknown, and, regardless of five customers waiting to be served, cry out from the door : " I want something to make me sleep ". Everyone yielded place to him ; he took his bottle and marched out as if this were a shop in Ballyglass and he still owner of Moore Hall. What other people's feelings might be he did not consider when he wanted something ; it was not cruelty or vanity or even selfishness ; it was a kind of imperial oblivion. He could be, on occasions, so absorbed by his own interests that for the sake of a phrase or a whim he could wound his oldest friends to the heart. To be his biographer and thus to be brought into contact with many whose friendship he had destroyed was to realize how terrible a desert he had made of his personal life. He had a few loyal friends of long standing, but even to them there was no assurance of friendship's natural peace. At any moment he might say or do something so unreasonable, so fiercely intolerant, that only a fixed determination to treat such outbursts as if they had not been could preserve a friendship of forty or fifty years. I myself was so much younger than he that what a man of his own generation was bound in self-respect to challenge I could conveniently disregard ; but I have heard him so belabour an old friend for no worse crime than a defence of Keats, that the whole friendship was imperilled and might have been broken irreparably if that friend, himself an artist, had not leaned back in his chair at dinner and said : " Well, Morgan, you continue the conversation, and, when Moore has finished talking about

Keats, I will rejoin you". The effect was magical. As always when Moore perceived that he had been at his worst, he bestirred himself to be at his best. He would not apologize, but he had a miraculous gift for the prolongation of sentences, and the sentence which had been begun in rage against Keats was led on, with a forced smile and a slow waving of the hand, by a painful and devious route until at last, emerging from the tunnel of unreason, it found itself in the eager sunlight of the French Impressionists. What a sentence! What skill, what swift and iron self-discipline had made it possible! The younger man whom Shaw knew long ago, wilful, flashy, wrong-headed, vulgar, the unregenerate Moore who never outgrew the tantrums of adolescence, had looked up over the edge of the dinner table, had behaved like a fool and, in the course of a single sentence, been crushed by a genius.

This invasion of his new by his dead life was perpetual in George Moore, for the truth is that his dead life would not stay in the grave. He was engaged in everlasting conflict with it, not as man only, but as writer. The history of this battle is to be read throughout his works, and, above all, in his re-writing of them. Those who imagine that these re-writings were governed by a desire to give a new twist to an anecdote or to fiddle with the turn of a sentence mistake their man. Nothing is more wearisome to an imaginative writer than to take up again old work written in a mood long since passed away; and nothing is more dangerous. It is better to let the work stand or to suppress it. Moore did suppress a great part of his work. *Mike Fletcher* and *Vain Fortune*, by no means *juvenilia*, for they were written after the *Confessions of a Young Man* and appeared between his thirty-third and thirty-fifth years, have vanished utterly. *Evelyn Innes* and *Sister Teresa*, though in print, were for him under a cloud; they were a subject repugnant to him, for here, he felt, even revision had failed; and these two books were written not in his thirties, but in his late forties, long after *Esther Waters*. They mark, as it were, a relapse between that masterpiece and the final struggle to re-create himself which began in his going to Ireland at the time of the Boer War and resulted instantly in *The Untilled Field* and *The Lake*.

Look back over his literary history from that date. Twenty

years earlier he had written one very good book, *A Mummer's Wife*, being then thirty-two. At thirty-six, he had produced his first immature but original essay in autobiography, a hint, so to speak, of the life to come, but not in itself of much value as a work of art. Then, for six years, he had done pale, tentative work with no greater merit than is to be found in the charm of *Spring Days*, until suddenly real boldness, real genius emerged in *Esther Waters*. Then came another period of stumbling until, at the age of fifty-one, he published *The Untilled Field* and stumbled no more. There is more in this than the customary ups-and-downs of a literary life. The ebb and flow of his powers represent the failure and the success of a process of exorcism. His re-writings will all be found upon examination to have had one dominating purpose : to silence the voice and eliminate the follies of the young man whom Shaw knew and who was still lively enough, when George Moore was in his eightieth year, to appear at the dinner table on the evening I have described.

There are several other indications that Moore was, in a special sense, haunted by this embarrassing spectre of his own youth, and that, in face of it, the battle of self-creation had to be fought anew each day he lived. Not only did he continually re-write his old books, but he had an abiding desire to re-write his former life, to re-write it in his mind and soul. Perhaps it was for this reason that he could break so callously with his old friends and that, when one of them came to visit him, he could refuse her admittance, crying out to his servant so that the visitor herself could not but hear : " No ! No ! She is too old ! She is too old ! " He had, perhaps, been engaged that day in a more than usually fierce battle with Amico Moorini, whose ally, because she was his contemporary, that visitor seemed to be.

(*To be concluded.*)

THIS AGE OF BROADCASTING

By Professor Ernest Barker

THE British Broadcasting Corporation, in its present form and with its present functions, depends on a Royal Charter granted for a term of ten years and expiring at the end of 1936. That Charter, in view of " the great value of the Broadcasting Service as a means of education and entertainment ", and in order that " the Service should be developed and exploited to the best advantage and in the national interest ", vested it in a public corporation of five persons " acting as Trustees for the national interest ". This corporation thereupon entered into an agreement with the Postmaster-General (formally termed a " licence and agreement "), under which it received from him a ten years' licence to establish stations and to broadcast matter, along with a percentage of the fees paid by listeners, and by which it was also subjected to certain restrictions in the operation of its service. Two of these restrictions are important. One of them relates to the current working of the service ; it provides that the corporation shall broadcast any matter which a Department of the Government shall require to be broadcast, and shall refrain from sending any broadcast matter which the Postmaster-General by notice in writing shall require it not to send. The other restriction relates to a period of emergency ; it provides that the Postmaster-General may, if he thinks an emergency has arisen, take possession of the stations of the corporation and cause them to be used for His Majesty's service. The system thus inaugurated on January 1st, 1927, under the Royal Charter of Incorporation and the simultaneous " licence and agreement ", is now being reconsidered, in view of the approaching expiration of the Charter and the licence, by a Government Committee of which Lord Ullswater is the chairman. A number of serious questions arise. Is the percentage of the fees of listeners received by the B.B.C. sufficient for the

adequate operation of its service? Are the restrictions to which it is subject really in the national interest, or do they impinge on that freedom of the expression of thought which is an integral element of our national liberty? What is the proper relation of the State to the service of broadcasting, and who is the proper Minister of State to answer in Parliament any question affecting the operation of that service? These questions are still *sub judice*, and they must be left in the mystery to which they belong. But they suggest further and wider questions on which thought may run freely and speech is not only permissible but even desirable. What is the general significance of this new instrument of the human mind? What is its true utility, and what are the limits to its utility? Who is the sovereign that it must serve ("under which King, Bezonian?")—the State, or the free nation of free men?

We are naturally prone to exalt the majesty of new inventions. The writer of the *Odyssey* lamented, long ago, that "men extol higher the song which comes newest to the ears of listeners". In this spirit the zealot of listening may compare the invention of broadcasting to the invention of printing, and claim that it is even a greater thing. The invention of printing multiplied books—but only for those who could read; the invention of broadcasting has multiplied the spoken word—and lo, it has carried it to millions, and tens of millions, who readily lend their ears. Such an argument is only numerical; but we think "in numbers", because numbers are obvious things which easily enter the mind. If we obey their potent suggestion, we shall expect great things from broadcasting. The invention of printing was accompanied by the Renaissance and the Reformation: may not a similar but far more widely diffused invention have similar but vastly more far-reaching consequences? A moment of cool reflection will serve to abate such hot and swollen hopes. The invention of printing meant a far greater change in human life than the invention of broadcasting. It came to a world poorly equipped with the means and methods of mental communication, and it wrought a revolution which showed itself equally in culture, religion and politics. Before the invention of printing men could communicate their thoughts to one another only by the circulation of manuscripts or by oral

speech to gatherings which, in the conditions of contemporary transport, were necessarily sparse and infrequent. Rumour might run from town to town, and from market to market; but the dissemination of rumour is never the same as the communication of thought. Printing armed the minds of men with a new and unparalleled instrument of the expression of thought; broadcasting has merely added a new tool to a workshop which was already stocked. When it came to us, some fifteen years ago, we had already newspapers widely read, and claiming an even wider circulation; we had already a developed system of transport, which enabled men to meet face to face, in large numbers and at regular intervals, for the purpose of communicating and discussing ideas. Compared with the resources which we already had, broadcasting—considered in itself, and merely as a new instrument of mental communication, apart from the use made of it and the nature and aims of its users—was only the addition of a feather-weight.

It is true that broadcasting has disseminated news and views to a far wider circle; but it is also true that it has disseminated them more superficially and with less incision. The printed word can be read and re-read and pondered: the eye can recapture and renew its impressions, and give the brain material for a considered and reflective judgment. The spoken word, transmitted through the ether, may fly in at one ear and out at the other; there is no recapturing—at any rate until the message be subsequently printed, or unless (which must be a very rare thing) it is copied down by the listener in the moment and act of reception. Of course there is broadcasting of sounds other than the spoken word: in Great Britain, for example, some seventy per cent. of the time of the broadcasting stations is allocated to the broadcasting of music (mainly of the type which is classified as "light"). The use of broadcasting for the purpose of musical entertainment is an important thing; it may serve to improve the national taste and deepen the national culture; it may leave lingering echoes of beauty which ring in the memory. But it is not part of the process of the communication of thought; and as regards the twenty per cent. (or less) of the time of broadcasting stations which is really allocated to that process, it may safely be said that not only does

it represent a mere fraction of the whole effort of broadcasting, but it is also spent, as a rule, in creating impressions which, by the very nature of their reception, are fugitive and transitory. The broadcast message, necessarily brief, and necessarily couched in terms which appeal to the masses, may indeed suggest and produce emotion—emotion which, if the same stimulus is continuously and permanently applied, may become a continuous and permanent habit of the mind. This is its power, and this is its danger. But the power and the danger do not reside in " the thing in itself ". They are not part of the inherent nature of broadcasting. They belong to its application, and they proceed from the nature and aims of its users.

The real change, and the true revolution, which has been introduced into the world by broadcasting is a change and a revolution arising from the peculiarities of ownership, or at any rate control, to which the new instrument lends itself. Those peculiarities may be roughly expressed in the one word " monopoly ". To establish broadcasting stations, and to furnish them with all the accessories of technical apparatus and the stuff of broadcast material which they require, is a large and onerous undertaking. There is perhaps only one country in which private enterprise has shouldered the weight of that undertaking. The United States of America, with its great resources, its large population and its tradition of free private enterprise, is the home of private or commercial broadcasting, conducted on much the same lines as any other form of business. The broadcasting stations work for profit : they sell their time, with all its facilities of publicity, to advertisers, who proceed to broadcast material which they think is likely to attract the attention of listeners to their wares. Excellent material may be broadcast by this method. Advertising is a subtle affair ; and a programme of fine music, if it is announced to the listening world as " sponsored" by some manufacturing concern, may redound to the credit and the profit of its " sponsor ". Even here, however, the tendency runs to monopoly. There are indeed a number of independent stations, of no great importance ; but the great bulk of broadcasting in the United States is done by two great systems, or federations, through " associated " stations which participate in one or other of the two groups. In Europe monopoly has

gone further, and private enterprise, willy-nilly, has quitted the field. Linked to a system of telephony, which is generally a prerogative of the State, and wielding powers of publicity which seem to affect the very foundations of the State, broadcasting has been drawn into the orbit of government, and has become in one form or another a government monopoly.

There are two main systems which have been followed in Europe. On one of these systems the government either owns and operates all the broadcasting stations, or, if it leaves some form of company vested with their ownership and charged with their operation, it controls and determines their sending of broadcast messages by one of its ministries. The Russian State, pledged to a general communism, naturally includes the machinery of broadcasting in its communist scheme; the new German National Socialist State, resolved on creating "unanimity of mind and will" in the nation, as naturally seeks to control and determine every message broadcast to the nation by means of its Ministry of Propaganda. The other main system, which is followed in Great Britain and some of the smaller European States, is a system of monopoly which is neither a matter of pure private enterprise nor of absolute State-control, but rather a half-way house. Under this system there is a single broadcasting company or corporation, chartered by the State and subject, in the last resort, to control by the State, but normally exercising its free discretion in the sending of broadcast messages and the general arrangement of programmes. The British form of this system, as we have already had reason to notice, nominally vests a large measure of control over broadcast messages in government departments, and more especially in the Postmaster-General's department. In practice this control is not exercised; and in its relations to the Executive government the B.B.C. may be fairly described as an autonomous corporation, except for the fact that its members, at any rate in form, are government nominees. The real control which is exercised over the B.B.C. is the general control of the House of Commons, acting in its great capacity of the source of national supplies and the grand inquest of the nation. The funds which the Postmaster-General pays to the Corporation, in the form of a percentage of listeners' fees, are paid "out of such aids and supplies as may from time

to time be appropriated by Parliament for that purpose " ; and since it is financed by Parliament, the Corporation is naturally subject to constant review by Parliament, either through questions addressed to the responsible minister or in connection with the annual estimates. It is this power of parliamentary review which is the proper and salubrious safeguard of the monopoly enjoyed by the B.B.C. The power of executive control is, in comparison, a little thing. But it is a little thing which might become dangerous if it were actually applied ; and it may well be suggested that this power, even if it is only a nominal power, should be dropped. Even in time of emergency it would seem best that the government should only take possession of broadcasting stations, and substitute itself for the B.B.C., when it has been specifically authorized by Parliament to do so.

The general principle of freedom of the expression of thought is a principle which applies to broadcasting no less than to other manifestations of thought. There may, indeed, be special peculiarities of broadcasting, as it actually operates, which properly subject it to special restrictions. In England, for example, it is a peculiarity of broadcasting that it is conducted by a State-chartered monopoly, armed with funds from parliamentary aids and supplies ; and this peculiarity properly entails the special restriction of a regular parliamentary review of its operations. But on the whole and in the main the general principle of freedom of the expression of thought is the dominant principle in the world of broadcasting as much as in other worlds. It is a principle which needs constant assertion and constant defence in the present conjuncture of the affairs of Europe. The appearance of broadcasting has synchronized with the appearance of the totalitarian State—the State which seeks, with an avid zest, not only to regulate the body, from birth and even before, but also to regiment and tune the mind, from the days of school to the days of maturity and manhood. The new instrument has made a peculiar appeal to the new form of State. It has seemed to be a heaven-sent instrument for the tuning of the mind. It has appeared to be the authentic voice of the very State, trumpeting abroad whatever the State desires to be heard, and silent whenever silence is enjoined by State-policy. The very rebel against the State, as was shown in Vienna during

the rising in the midsummer of 1934, when Dr. Dollfuss met with his death, directs his first efforts to the capture of the wireless. He feels that he is seizing in it the ganglion and nerve-centre of the State.

Even when the State is not totalitarian, the fact that broadcasting is a monopoly, and a monopoly closely connected with the State, is apt to breed exaggerated ideas both of the uses to which it can be put and the abuses to which it is subject. The Press is a murmur of many voices, confusing, contradicting, cancelling; broadcasting is one and indivisible. The ordinary man, listening to the one voice which

> . . . nightly to the listening earth
> Repeats the story . . .

may come to the conclusion that it is *the* voice; that here Truth herself is speaking—or if not Truth herself, at any rate the State, which it is perilously easy in these days to mistake for the Truth and the Way. Similarly the broadcasting authority, which controls and emits the voice, may feel that it is the custodian—the grave and responsible custodian—of a sort of magical power, which must be gravely and responsibly used in the cause of sound politics, sober virtue and true religion. It is true that in moments of crisis the use of the wireless may be a matter of profound significance to the listener, and of solemn responsibility for the transmitter. The "general strike" of 1926 was such a moment: the election of 1931 was perhaps another. It is possible that the messages broadcast during that election, and particularly those broadcast by Lord Snowden, had a crucial importance. But it would be a grave error to think that in normal times the agency of broadcasting has the power to mould or shape public opinion; and it would be a still graver error to think that it has the right. Any power which that agency has hitherto wielded is likely to decrease, as the new instrument becomes less novel and more familiar—less romantic, and more a matter of the ordinary prose of daily life. But the question of right is far more important than the question of power. On that question it may safely be said that a broadcasting authority has no right to act as a maker or smithy of *opinion:* it has the right, and the duty, to act as a transmitter and a conduit of *opinions*. In other words, it is the forum of all views rather

than the trumpet of one. In a country such as ours, which governs itself on the principle of democracy, broadcasting, like every other means of communication, must necessarily be adjusted to that principle. The essence of democracy is discussion—free discussion of competing views and different opinions, in order that the best may prevail, or any rate some compromise may be attained which is the practicable best for a human community where men differ about what is to be done but must agree on doing something. As Milton wrote, translating Euripides, at the beginning of the *Areopagitica*,

> This is true liberty, when free-born men,
> Having to advise the public, may speak free.

Broadcasting is simply one of the ways in which free-born men, speaking freely, can advise the public.

This is not, indeed, the whole of the matter. An unregulated forum of discussion would be a pandemonium rather than a forum. Every public meeting has rules of procedure, enforced by a chairman; and the forum of the B.B.C. has its rules, enforced by the Corporation through its Director General. It is a just subject of congratulation, to them and to ourselves, that fair rules have been instituted, fairly and impartially enforced, and generally and tolerantly accepted. There is still some dissatisfaction. The rationalist complains that he cannot find a hearing—or rather, a chance of speaking. Gay spirits complain that they are over-edified by serious talks—not to speak of "serious music". But on the whole it is bare justice to say that a standard of decency and good taste has been combined with a practice of the open forum and an even-handed impartiality. The B.B.C. can be—at any rate it has been—equally accused of supporting vested interests and fogeyism, and of being radical, "neo-everything", and even communistic. This cross-fire of accusations is in effect a high laudation. It is indeed a remarkable thing that a spirit of constant inquiry and progressive experimentation has been combined with a steady caution and the keeping of an even keel through new and uncharted waters.

Broadcasting has naturally had its difficulties with the Press. It seemed in its early days—perhaps it still seems—to be a rival. When the B.B.C. itself launched out into journalism, and began to publish *The Listener*, the complaints of the Press were loud.

They are still to be heard today. There are three subjects that seem to be " news ", and to excite the attention of the daily Press. One is woman, in all her manifestations ; another is Oxford (all the more as Oxford is supposed to be connected with woman) ; the third is the B.B.C. and its programmes and personnel. But the Press is finding, more and more, that the B.B.C. is rather a complement, and indeed an auxiliary, than a rival. Nobody who listens to the broadcast news in the evening is ever less hungry for his newspaper next morning. And even if it were a rival, broadcasting is something different in kind from the Press. It belongs to another sphere. It is a separate *genre*. Just because the Press is multitudinous, each paper can adopt and press its policy, assume a particular hue, and follow a particular line. Broadcasting suffers from the disabilities of Cæsar's wife. It has to be above suspicion. On political and social and economic questions it can only follow one of two lines, with no *sors tertia*. Either the broadcasting authority allows or invites others to speak—and then it must maintain a white and colourless impartiality ; or it speaks itself, through the cultured but unknown voice of one of its " announcers "—and then, once more, it must wear the same white flower of blamelessness. It may claim that it has " a white radiance ". But there is more excitement in belonging to that " dome of many-coloured glass " under which the Press lives and moves.

The Press always tempts to digression. Democracy, and the relation of broadcasting to its principle and its practice, was the theme from which we digressed. Some have felt that broadcasting has already contributed, and may contribute more, to the levelling and fusion of classes. There are seven million listening sets in the Kingdom, and all of His Majesty's subjects can listen to his voice together, as a single family. This is a great thing, and nobody who remembers May the Sixth will fail to recognize its greatness. We may also say, in a paradox, that the music which it broadcasts is the greatest service which the B.B.C. has rendered to the cause of democracy. At any rate it is certain—or as certain as most things are—that joy has been spread " in widest commonalty " by the quality of broadcast music. On the other hand there are some who feel that broadcasting may tend to demagogy as well as to genuine democracy.

They have in their minds the United States, and they are thinking of the eloquent priest and the late Mr. Huey Long. But the use of the wireless by the demagogue seems to belong to the area of commercial broadcasting. It is one of the aspects, or shadows, of the conduct of broadcasting on the business lines of private enterprise. That which pays pays; and if demagogy pays it will be allowed, and asked, to frequent the commercial microphone.

Broadcasting transcends the sphere of domestic and national politics. It is an international—we may almost say an œcumenical—force. Nowhere has it shown more plainly, and more purely, what it can do to bind nations together than in the British Empire. The Statute of Westminster, passed in 1931, left the Dominions as autonomous States, bound together mainly, if not entirely, by common allegiance to the same King. The Imperial broadcasting service, developed in recent years, and offered by the B.B.C. as a free gift to the Dominions, has helped the King signally in his great task of cementing the Empire, and it has helped him to do so by enabling him to speak directly and immediately to all his subjects in every clime. In the sphere of international as distinct from that of imperial relations, and more particularly in the troubled domain of European affairs, broadcasting offers a field at once full of possibilities and bristling with problems. "Nation shall speak unto nation" is a motto of our own B.B.C. The motto suggests a golden harvest of opportunities, with broadcasting allied to the League of Nations and the International Labour Office, and with international broadcasts growing in volume and frequency to bring nation closer to nation. Something has actually been done to garner some of the harvest. The Institute of Intellectual Co-operation has suggested modes of co-operation between the different national broadcasting systems: the International Broadcasting Union, in which the broadcasting authorities of different countries have been voluntarily federated for the last ten years, has sought to ease friction and to promote fraternity. But in the present restive and sensitive condition of Europe broadcasting may as easily be a cause of offence as a link of amity. Nation may speak unto nation not in the tones of amity, but in the language of asperity. A State may set one of its broadcasting stations to broadcast *at* another State, as happened lately on the borders of

Austria. Short of that, a State may seek to spread its tendencies and its general philosophy of politics or economics by arranging broadcasts to other countries delivered in their own language, and calculated to affect their internal opinion and policy. Even without any deliberate intention the broadcasting authority of one country, in sending messages to its own nationals, may fall into language about another country which may offend that country's government. It will be remembered that Poland, not very long ago, felt itself grieved by the language of a British broadcast. In one way or another the problems of international broadcasting are as great as the possibilities. Much has been done, and more may still be done, to solve those problems by the action of the International Broadcasting Union, as it gradually establishes a code of honour and of good professional conduct among its members in different countries. But some of the issues raised by international broadcasting transcend the scope of the broadcasting profession, and involve the governments of States. So long as States face one another " in the state and posture of gladiators ", there will be gladiatorial challenges and provocations in the ether ; and broadcasting will be swept, like every other human invention, into the cause and arena of war.

Enough—perhaps more than enough—has been said about the connection between broadcasting and politics. Some final words —too few to do justice to the theme—must be given to the connection between broadcasting and general culture. Here too there are dangers to be avoided as well as opportunities to be seized. There is the danger of what may be called *Ersatz*-culture—the danger of some facile and peptonized substitute for the real substance. Plato ranked lowest among the faculties of the mind that which he termed by the name of " perception of shadows ". There is a sense in which broadcasting reduces the mind to a perception of shadows of shadows—to imitations of music in lieu of true music : imitations of lectures in place of true lectures ; imitations of the drama in place of true drama. There are musicians who fear that " substitute " music may oust genuine music, just as there are lecturers and speakers who expect their lectures or speeches to be ousted by broadcast talks. The fear and the expectation are ungrounded. Broadcasting is undimensional : it acts, and it can only act, in the one

dimension of sound. Man is only happy, and only exercising his full human faculty, when he moves in more than one dimension —when he sees as well as hears, and sees and hears in close touch and proximity to others who are seeing and hearing at his side.

Here we touch the true function of broadcasting in the sphere of culture. It cannot give culture itself. It is too pale a shadow : too much of a ghost ; too tenuous an abstraction, living in the one isolated dimension of sound. Like Cœlus in Keats' *Hyperion*, it is bound to confess

> I am but a voice ;
> My life is but the life of winds and tides,
> No more than winds and tides can I avail.

But while broadcasting is thus confined and limited, and while, in the realm of culture, it can only provide the mind with the representation of shadows, it can select fine shadows for representation, and thus move and induce the hearer to an appetite for fine substance.

The B.B.C. has done a great work in maintaining a standard of taste and keeping that standard before the millions of its listeners. True it exists, as the preamble of its charter declares, for entertainment as well as for education ; but there is no real gulf between them, and entertainment itself can be, and at its best actually is, a part or an aspect of man's education. We may sometimes feel that our broadcast programmes entertain us too loftily, and that a young and advanced æsthetic *élite*, encamped in the Parnassus of Broadcasting House, is seizing us by the hair of our heads to draw us into a modernist Paradise in which our feeble spirits faint. But piquancy and stimulus are necessary to broadcasting. They are the sauce which seasons and redeems its abstraction. It is " but a voice ": let it be a new voice, and let it sing something new. No harm is done to English broadcasting if youth sits on the prow and its idea of pleasure stands at the helm. Youth is more serious than age ; and its idea of pleasure is high and austere—at any rate in music and poetry. Perhaps it is a good thing that a young intelligentsia should sting us, like a gadfly, into a readiness to hear always some new thing. It stops us from settling down on the lees of our national love of custom—custom good, bad or indifferent, provided only that it be custom.

EYES LEFT IN FRNCE

By D. W. Brogan

TO return to France this summer, after ten months absence, was to note a curious change of atmosphere. Last autumn the smoke was beginning to clear away from the Stavisky affair and its aftermath, and it was easy to see, especially in the provinces, that no irreparable damage has been done to " republican institutions ". This summer, in Paris and in the provinces, the rise of a Fascist danger is more apparent than the collapse of M. Doumergue's attempts to reform the parliamentary system. The rapid growth of Colonel de la Rocque's " Croix de Feu " and of other more or less openly Fascist bodies, the *Jeunesses Patriotes*, the *Solidarité Française*, even of the serio-comic *Francistes* with their emblem of the double-headed Frankish axe, the " francisque ", have all contributed to disturb public opinion and to alarm the parties of the Left. It is possible that these parties have not been guiltless of exaggerating a Fascist menace which enables them to retreat from previous positions under good cover, but, whatever the degree of the Fascist danger, the more militant sections of the Left have resolved to take it seriously. No one with the German *débâcle* in mind can blame them for that. They have resolved that mere party quarrels will not stand in the way of unity, that all enemies of Fascism must unite in defence of " republican liberties ". Their resolution was made manifest to the world by united processions on July 14th, processions in which Radicals and Socialists and Communists all marched together, in which the red flag and the tricolour were borne aloft, and the Marseillaise, "recaptured from the Right ", was sung, along with the " Internationale ". The demonstrations were held ; they were impressive, in the main, if not in the details, and prudent politicians became convinced that the reaction had shot its bolt and that the general election of 1936 would give a Left majority, as usual.

If not, as yet, among the rank and file, among the men at the top, the feeling has begun to spread, that an electoral victory for the old " cartel des gauches " is not enough. After all, as a Fascist leaflet points out, there *is* a Left majority as it is ! There was a Left majority in 1924—and within two years Poincaré had to be called in to bail out the sinking ship. There was a Left majority in 1932, and M. Laval is trying, in more difficult circumstances, to repeat the success of M. Poincaré. The causes of the doubts and dubieties are not far to seek.

The core of any Left-majority has been in the past and may well be in the future, the Radical-Socialist party. Intellectuals, infuriated by the low level of party thinking which satisfies that body, have long predicted its demise, bled of its most active members, as it was bound to be, by the Socialists. But the party has refused to die and to the surprise of others, if not of itself, it passed its Socialist allies in the election of 1932 with some ease. Bound by their doctrinal purity, the Socialists refused to enter the Radical government and finally brought, M. Daladier down at the end of 1933. Whether M. Léon Blum, the Socialist leader, wished merely to demonstrate his fidelity to the party programme, or whether he hoped to do better does not much matter, for it was during the parliamentary confusion that followed this homage to party programmes that the Stavisky case blew up.

The general lines of that entertaining if painful affair are probably well remembered ; its apparently endless ramifications were complicated by the detective story charms of the Prince " murder ", to which only Mr. Freeman Wills Croft or, in view of the setting in Dijon, Mr. A. E. W. Mason could do justice. In the plentiful throwing of mud, the Radical-Socialist party got at least its share and, for a moment, it seemed as if there might be a swing to the Right. But the Right overplayed its hand (Mr. Gladstone once declared the French conservatives to be the stupidest in the world) : the Chamber sat tight, let the storm more or less blow over and, leaving the dirty work to MM. Doumergue, Flandin and Laval, reserved its strength for its real job, the general election of 1936.

That policy has been successful, i.e., it is certain, barring dramatic accidents, that the Left will win the election of 1936

as, in anything like normal circumstances, the Left has won every election in this century. But the circumstances are not normal, and although the abnormality may not affect the election profoundly, it will affect the aftermath. Questions have been piling up for a generation which will have to be attended to questions which few veteran politicians want to hear asked or answered.

What are the questions thus ignored? There is, of course, the extraordinary administrative anarchy revealed by the Stavisky affair. There was a time when the French could talk, without too much absurdity, of "our administration which all the world envies us". That time is long past and, to do them justice, few French people talk that way now. Instead they complain of "*paperasserie*". Anyone who has drawn money from a French bank or dealt with the French post office may, at first sight, be inclined to agree with this criticism, but the most startling aspect of the Stavisky affair was the *absence* of *paperasserie*—at the top. We laugh at our Civil Service's passion for initialling minutes and respectfully homologating suggestions, but it has this advantage that one can, at a pinch, find someone who is responsible for a decision. There is a limit to the possibilities of passing the buck; even the longest game of "Button, button, who's got the button?" has to end. They order these matters better in France, from the point of view of the official, that is. In French (administrative) cricket, the easy catches are always dropped or given by Mr. A. N. Other. Even if the "Maffia" did murder M. Prince to get at the "documents", were there no copies? It would need more than the murder of a High Court judge to stifle a really important scandal with us—if only, as a cynical Frenchman might point out, because care would be taken to see that it never got out in the first place!

What is true of Justice is true of other branches of the administration. "*La République*," said M. Bergeret, forty years ago, "*c'est la facilité*." Favours past and to come play a great part in the Chamber—and all through French political life; they are the oil that makes the governmental machine go and, to squirt the oil in, it is frequently necessary to dismantle the machine.

This habit was expensive, but its psychological results seemed to the average Frenchman worth the price—anyway the price was not immediately apparent ; it was chalked up to that long account marked " *aux frais de la princesse* ". In the meantime the rigours of administration and the law were made more tolerable. At one end of the scale, great magnates got concessions or adjustments of taxes ; at the other a boy got a scholarship which enabled him to get the education that later enabled him, in turn, to justify the system that had made him what he was. It was a very poor or disreputable Frenchman that could not do some kind of wangling ; that could not travel on the railways at reduced fares or become a Knight of Agricultural Merit or a Member of the French Academy. The pleasures of having influence or, as the Americans coarsely put it, " pull " were, in democratic France as in democratic America, joys in widest commonalty spread, not reserved for really nice people, as is the healthy English custom. On the spreading of such joys, political success largely depended, if not for individuals, at least for groups, and the most skilful of all the agencies for this type of work was the French Radical-Socialist party.

As long as government was a slow affair, as long as fundamental reforms were things promised at elections and then " *mis à l'étude* " after them, all went well, or fairly well. The system was expensive in money ; it had the drawbacks of recurring scandals, but, as the Second Empire and Third Republic discovered, outside Paris scandals evoke only a languid interest. It was necessary to have talking-points, and so anti-clericalism, served as well as the bloody shirt in American politics after the Civil War. In short, *mutatis mutandis*, the Radical-Socialists got on in much the same way as the Republicans in America, with the slogans of the great revolution and hostility to clericalism as emotional background to neat combinations of interests, great and small. No other French party had such intellectually feeble apologists, so few stars, if we except " Alain ", who has erected the practice of favours for all into a system of government.

But it is increasingly uncertain whether the country can afford or endure this system much longer. In a world in which, for good or ill, there are so many governments which can make

decisions and carry them out overnight, the French system of voting for a project " in principle " and then leaving it to sleep for twenty years or so seems less admirable than it did in the good old days. More serious is the impact of current economic problems. Having been spared the earlier ravages of the crisis, the French might have been intellectually prepared for it when at last it came. They were not. In no civilized country is fundamental contempt for economics so profound as in France, a contempt not bred by familiarity. This weakness is evident in the making of laws and in their discussion. The project for keeping wheat up by a legal price, when there was an export surplus, was an example of legislation in the good faith of whose authors it was hard to believe. The law did not work well, for reasons too obvious to note, but if the price of wheat did not stay at the legal level, the fault, the peasant was convinced, was due to corruption, to the admission of foreign wheat under various pretences. Deputies, officials, millers were all doing well out of the scandal. Obviously, for was there not a legal price for wheat, and was it not notorious that when you had wheat to sell, you could not get the legal price ? The peasant's diagnosis may have been wrong and probably was wrong. Even if it was right, it was only part of the explanation. But from another point of view, the peasant had put his finger on a sore spot. In the *République des Camarades* any complicated economic measure is sure to be suspect of manipulation by persons with pull, the long trail of scandals is there to weaken simple faith—and more important than scandals is the old habit of adjusting the administration to individuals. At the top, it may be a case of the Senate's taking a kindly view of the indiscretion of a colleague who has been involved in an ugly company scandal ; lower down the scale it may be the tactful failure of an official to enforce the regulations against the Colorado beetle when the offender is an important elector—and the senatorial elections are at hand. All this is very human, but it is quite incompatible with serious economic " planning " or even regulation. If the system is not changed, no political majority in the Chamber, whatever its programme, is going to get very far with profound economic changes.

But why talk of profound economic changes ? Fairly vague

generalizations about justice, progress, equality, etc., have done very well—from the electoral point of view—in the past. With them has gone a slow but regular dosing of the existing system with reforms, none of them very profound, but in the mass not negligible. In the Radical-Socialist party there are many who do not see why the old methods have to be given up. Yet they will have to be given up for two reasons. The first is economic and not perhaps permanent. But, as long as the crisis lasts, as long as the divergencies of price levels set the urban producer against the *rentier* and the peasant against both, the need for an economic decision will grow more and more acute and an economic decision can only be made at the cost of alienating at least one important section of the party.

The political reasons are even more compelling. The old union of the Left parties was based on a tacit agreement not to raise fundamental questions. That union got more and more difficult, as was seen when, in the name of party orthodoxy, M. Blum overthrew M. Daladier. If it was difficult in 1932-1933, it is far more difficult now. As the crisis has become more acute, the Socialists have had to stress, more and more, their economic policy, have had to make promises to their supporters or possible supporters which, with all the good will in the world, cannot be easily squared with the principles and practice of the Radicals. If it were only a question of different programmes that would not matter, but in the present temper of the French people it will be necessary to provide more than parliamentary manœuvres to satisfy the voters, even after they have elected the Chamber. There is no chance that the electorate will go to sleep for the next four years—as it ought to do, in the view of the orthodox legitimists of parliamentary government. The Socialists are quite aware of this, and, if they were not, they have new-found friends to tell them.

The new friends are the Communists. It is no longer possible to say that the Third International is unteachable. It has learned the lesson of its German folly and (of course without any public confession of error), has changed course. To defend democratic liberties in France (and incidentally the power of a military ally of the Soviet Government), all the old slogans have been hastily discarded. It must have been hard for the

old hands who had such a fine vocabulary of carefully acquired abuse to have to call former " Social-Fascists " and "Social-Flics " " comrades ". It must have been hard to soft-pedal denunciations of the French army, as not only an oppressor of the workers but an agent of war against Soviet Russia, but with a commendable discipline the job was done. A candid friend of the Left has expressed scepticism about the willingness of the French people to take seriously a party suddenly ready to defend France on orders from Moscow, but the most hardened militarist must admire the discipline displayed. Needless to say, there have been heart-burnings. There are those who point out that it has taken Moscow years to see the obvious. There are others who hate to abandon the old ways and others whose ability to swallow their words without gagging is not as strong as their willingness to toe the party line. However, the word has gone out, ' hide the Russian face of the Third International, play up Dimitrov, soft-pedal Stalin. Hide behind the door those old posters showing Léon Blum as a more dangerous enemy of the workers than Poincaré. Keep your face straight when you go to protest to the capitalist government about the illegal and revolutionary designs of the Fascists, grow righteously indignant when any such designs are attributed to you '. Such are the instructions from Moscow and, as far as the leaders can manage it, they are being obeyed. Of course, the rank and file of the party are inclined to forget themselves. Despite orders they will *not* sing the " Marseillaise " as well as that dreary ditty, the " Internationale ". Even on July 14th, when it was important to show union, they would hiss " *assassins* " at the police, despite the courting of those defenders of democratic liberties which has been going on. They would greet that eminent Radical *Bonze*, Jammy Schmidt, with cries of " *les Soviets partout* " to which sentiment, M. Schmidt doffed his hat, without, it is probable, giving inward assent.

More serious is the activity of " left-wing deviationists ". Trotskyism was only extirpated from the French Communist Party with considerable difficulty and the Trotskyist attitude is widespread. Revolt against Russian orders has not notably hurt M. Doriot, Mayor of Saint Denis. It has given point to dissenters who now abuse the regular party as it used to abuse

the Socialists. All the rich vocabulary of abuse usual among comrades is at the disposal of the extreme left in their attack on "Communo-patriotism." Thus the Communist pressure on the Socialist must take the form of a demand for actual not verbal satisfactions for the minimum programme, especially in the matter of taxation, lest the Communists be outbid by the dissenters on *their* left, that danger which French politicians have always to fear.

But is there any minimum programme that the three sections of the Left front can combine on? It is very hard to say, for the Communists must necessarily play a double game. Hitherto their strength has been in the Red industrial suburbs of Paris; to the proletariat of Villejuif or Gennevilliers it was simple to promise a new heaven. For an industrial area the goods are already in stock. It is harder in the rural areas—and it is in the rural areas that the recent progress of the party has been most striking. In districts where the peasants do not own their land it is, of course, easy to promise to renters or share-farmers the abolition of landlordism. But there are areas where Communism is strong, where it must appeal to peasant proprietors. It can do a little by discriminating between big and small holders, but it dare not, as yet, attack private property or preach the delights of collectivized farming. In this it is prudent; even after the revolution, I should not like to be the zealous young Communist sent down from Paris to collectivize some areas which are at the moment strong for the Party. The French peasant is no ex-serf used to orders from above, even if they come from a government of workers and peasants! What the Communists *can* safely promise is severer taxation of the rich and better prices; they can also promise an administration which will sympathize with the Left and not with the Right.

So far the Socialists can meet the Communist demands. They can back a programme of effective income tax, of general tax reform and of going off gold. Of course, the latter object is not openly aimed at, but it seems to be necessarily involved in the present attack on the Laval economy measures, not as being unfair in their details, but as being fundamentally misconceived. Instead of cutting down expenditure, give people

more money to spend. That way "reflation" lies.

There should be, in theory, little opposition to this minimum programme by the Radicals. The nationalizing of the Bank of France or of "credit", what could be more attractive to a party which, with a happy sense of the power of mere words, began to denounce "*les congrégations économiques*", when it noted that attacks on "*les congrégations* (the religious orders) no longer roused enthusiasm. But the leaders of the party know that the Bank of France is rather a more formidable opponent than the Jesuits, the Crédit Lyonnais capable of greater resistance than the Augustinians! The "interests" have not been unduly alarmed, and it has been possible to be a good Radical-Socialist without doing more than paying lip-service to the duty of war on capital. Moreover, any such war must mean currency troubles, and, combined with the present uneasy state of the public mind, that might well be enough to drive the franc off gold—and down where? Even if there were not enough *rentiers* in the party to remind its leaders of the awkwardness of this, the memory of 1925-26 is probably quite clear in the minds of M. Herriot and some of his senior colleagues! A financial panic destroyed the electoral victory of 1924, what would another do to the future victory of 1936?

Thus, while it has been easy for Communist and Socialist to unite in denunciation of the economy decrees of M. Laval, it has been impossible for all Radical-Socialists to imitate them. An important section of the party leaders are actually in the Laval Government, and many of the elder statesmen who are out of it have no liking for the company some of the younger men have been keeping. These elder statesmen may think, with some show of reason, that common-front rallies to the cry of "Daladier in power" may come very well from official revolutionary parties looking for a Kerensky, but that, from the point of view of the old party which has so often saved the Republic, the thing to remember is that the disasters of last year were incurred under the leadership of MM. Chautemps and Daladier, with the effective, if unintentional, aid of M. Blum. The split in the party has been made more obvious by the by-election in the first district of Clermont-Ferrand where, on the Radical candidate's being beaten by the Socialist on the

first ballot, the Radical machine refused to abide by " republican discipline ", and put up another candidate with the support of the Right to oppose M. Villedieu. This breach of faith was made more annoying by not being successful, as the Socialist won on the second ballot—though narrowly. It is obvious that before a general election this sort of thing will have to stop, or the old union of the Left parties be abandoned—which would be a political revolution.

It is going to be very difficult for the Radical-Socialists to meet the emergency with which the reassembly of the Chamber will present them. Vigorous denunciation of the Laval economies is going to look very silly, if the Chamber fails to overthrow M. Laval and repeal the obnoxious decrees! Yet it is very doubtful if the present Chamber will do this. If it does not, the crack in the Radical ranks will be revealed, the supporters of M. Herriot will be ranged against those of M. Daladier, " right " against " left ". If the Chamber does overthrow M. Laval, a mere stop-gap Left government will give plenty of time before the elections for both the Communists and the Fascists to win recruits. With this danger in mind, some Socialists wish to insist on dissolving the Chamber at once, thus adopting a measure hitherto anathema to the Radicals since it was last tried by Marshal MacMahon nearly sixty years ago. On this issue, too, the Radicals will have to make up their minds—and they can hardly do that and remain united.

The Radical party and the old governmental system of the Third Republic have passed through so many crises, their doom has been so often announced, that it is dangerous even to hint probabilities, much less prophesy with certainty. But it seems probable that, if the economic crisis continues, if peasants and workers continue to be as discontented as they are now, some drastic measures, either in the direction of real liberation of commerce and industry from legal shackles (and not merely as much relaxation as suits the more unpopular sections of French " big business ") or of regulation and planning of a more serious kind than is at present possible, will have to be tried. A new Chamber in which the last word lies with the Radical-Socialists, profoundly divided as they are as to means and ends, can only discredit parliamentary government still further. On

that discredit extremists of both Left and Right are counting. A feeble and irresponsible majority is what the more prudent leaders of the Left fear. A strong government, based on a coherent and loyal majority in the Chamber, means a dissolution of the present Radical party or a profound change in its methods and ideals. Such a recasting of the party is feared, by some; the *Dépêche de Toulouse* is full of warnings of the dangers on that side. The failure to recast the party is full of dangers too—as is pointed out by the younger leaders. If the split does not come now, it will come later, perhaps too late. In the great Paris procession on July 14th, the red flag and the tricolour were carried side by side. Both flags were very large. A bad tear developed in the tricolour and, before the procession of the "*front populaire*" was well under way, the national flag seemed in danger of splitting. It may have been an omen!

UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE DISTRESSED AREAS

By Hugh Molson, M.P.

UNEMPLOYMENT is an issue that challenges the reason and arouses the emotions of the elector, and there is a real danger that in the excitement of a general election, unless it is fought upon a question of foreign affairs, unreasoning emotion will prevail. Thirteen years of painful familiarity with this problem ought to have taught us that it is neither an ailment capable of speedy cure nor the last illness of a nation. Even a Committee of the Trade Union Congress can see " no economic readjustments in the near future, whether introduced by a Conservative or Socialist Government, which will absorb the majority of workers who are at present deprived of their livelihood ", and no one who has read Mr. Malcolm Stewart's report on the Special Areas imagines they will regain their old prosperity. On the other hand, the employed population is larger than ever before and has a higher standard of living. These facts forbid both facile optimism and despairing pessimism.

The great exporting industries, whose prosperity in the nineteenth century called our great population into existence, were probably fated in the twentieth to decline in any case. The war left intensified foreign competition, and during the years till 1929 there were few signs of real revival. The great depression will probably have consequences as grave and as permanent as the war itself.

All these industries—coal, iron and steel, heavy engineering, cotton, shipping and shipbuilding—are concentrated in certain localities which are now known as the Distressed or, euphemistically, the Special Areas.

There is, however, another and hopeful aspect of the situation. The new, " light " and luxury industries have expanded since

the war in a way that could not have been foreseen. The manufacture of motor cars, radio sets, gramophones, artificial silk and electrical apparatus of all kinds has made new industrial areas in great districts in the South, East and Midlands of England, and has given employment to rapidly increasing numbers of people ; that is at once the effect and the cause of the general rise in the standard of living. The tariff system introduced by the National Government has done neither the good that the Protectionists nor the harm that the Free Traders anticipated, but it has undoubtedly contributed to that expansion of the home market which far exceeds what most economists believed possible, and which has offset to some extent the decline in the export trades.

The fact is that adjustments which should have taken fifty years have been telescoped into the seventeen years since the war. Such sudden changes were bound to be painful, but our economy has shown a surprising flexibility. So great, indeed, has that flexibility been that we should have experienced no serious unemployment problem but for the increase of the employable population and the virtual cessation of all emigration. Between 1923 and 1933 the number of persons employed in the coal mines declined by 572,263, but simultaneously the number of persons employed in the distributive trades increased by 586,401. Between 1923 and 1933 the expanding industries provided additional employment for a number equal to all those displaced by labour-saving devices and those displaced by the decline in other industries, and in addition for 500,000 of the increase in the population. If, then, British industry showed that remarkable expansion during ten years of unrelieved depression followed by crisis, may we not reasonably anticipate a similar and much greater expansion during the next ten years ?

Unfortunately we started the second decade, 1933 to 1943, in a far worse position than we started the preceding one. Our exports, which in 1934 were less than 78 per cent. of their volume in 1929, are unlikely to return to anything like their old level. It is this apparently permanent decline which leaves the expanding industries the formidable task of absorbing whatever proportion of the 2,000,000 on the live register are

wholly unemployed and fit for work—perhaps rather more than 1,000,000. But that is not all. Despite the incipient decline in the total population, the number of persons of 16 to 64 (and therefore seeking work) will be about 1,000,000 greater in 1943 than in 1933. If, therefore, unemployment is to be reduced to a minimum by that time, industry would have to afford over 2,000,000 more jobs, or an expansion over the present total of employment of nearly 20 per cent.; if unemployment is not to become any worse, industry must offer 1,000,000 more jobs or an expansion of nearly 10 per cent.—an expansion not impossible, but highly improbable.

It is surely clear that acute and prolonged unemployment is at the moment an insoluble problem, bound to last, say, another fifteen years, and due to the fact that certain natural adjustments are taking place too slowly; the elderly miner cannot learn to make gramophones, the inhabitants of Jarrow cannot be moved to the new industrial areas of the South, and the employable population which grew with the rise, will not immediately decline with the fall, in our export trade. Equally clearly the necessary adjustments are producing themselves naturally. In 1976 the population will have declined to 33,000,000, a level at which it stood in 1890. The number of persons between the ages of 15 and 65 which will be 31,921,900 in 1941, will have fallen by 641,200 by 1951 and the decline will continue. Wise policy will, therefore, concentrate on facilitating these natural developments, on reducing the suffering to individuals that they entail, and above all on making the social arrangements needed by the very different Britain which will have emerged by 1950. We must accept as inevitable that the majority of men over forty who have found themselves stranded for a year or more will never work again, and that the populations of the Special Areas will rapidly dwindle or die out. But we may equally confidently expect that the younger men will find increasing employment in the developing areas.

It is sometimes suggested that there are two alternative ways of dealing with the Depressed Areas—either to transfer the population elsewhere or to induce new industries to go there. Both methods ought to be followed simultaneously. Some

parts of the Depressed Areas, especially those where coal mines have been closed or dismantled, are not suitable for any kind of industrial activity. In these districts the population should be encouraged to die out by facilitating the transfer of the young, and, it may be added, by the provision of birth control clinics. Other parts of the Depressed Areas—Mr. Malcolm Stewart instances the banks of the Tyne—are eminently suitable on economic grounds for new enterprises, and the boldest effort should be made to bring these into use.

I may claim to have been the first Member of this Parliament to suggest this policy. On April 14th, 1932, I emphasised the evil effects of the transfer of industry from old to new areas, the disruption of communities and families, the abandonment of much economic and social capital in the North simultaneously with the desecration of rural amenities in the South ; I pointed out that the cost of urbanising " a green field ", including the cost of housing, schools, roads, sewers, etc., but not the factory or its equipment, was estimated at between £433 and £495 per worker transferred. The evils are now generally recognised, but no method has so far been devised effectively to encourage the location of new industries in the Depressed Areas without discouraging the efficient organisation of industry or even preventing its development. The tendency for example of the iron and allied industries to put up great plants in Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire will probably accentuate the social problem, especially in South Wales. That new location is due, however, to the existence in those counties of large deposits of iron ore and to the need for continuous processes which will enable a series of different products to be produced from a single heating. The efficiency of the industry perhaps necessarily involves in this case a painful transfer of plant and population.

These difficulties do not, however, justify an attitude of supine resignation. An opportunity was surely missed when the Depressed Areas Act was passed. It was amended to substitute for the word " Depressed " the innocuous euphemism " Special ". What was needed was the courageous word " Reconstruction ", and the Commissioners should have been empowered to try out in those areas some of the many suggestions that have been made to the Government. The

Act concedes the principle that such localised distress warrants special assistance which other parts of the country do not receive. Why not then have favoured their demand for work instead of their demand for increased amenities? Why not then have tried the effect of relieving new industries coming there of all rates for ten years, of paying out of the Exchequer the employer's contributions to the insurance schemes, or even of contributing by way of subsidy some portion of the cost price of industrial sites? Such experiments would be hazardous and might fail, they would no doubt be resented as unjust to employers in other areas, but I believe that the desperate problem justifies bold measures. As Mr. Stewart says: "The problem of the Special Areas cannot be successfully solved without the application of some unconventional principles."

Mr. Lloyd George's "New Deal" has caused a useful stir in the world of politics, because he has challenged the view that the revival of trade which is now proceeding, and for which the Government can fairly claim great credit, is in itself sufficient. The "New Deal" suffers, however, from the opposite defect of supposing that heroic measures can remedy what can be cured only by time. In order to maintain this thesis it exaggerates the effect of a large programme of public works and assumes that a great increase in agricultural production at home will not injuriously affect our exports. As a matter of fact, far more is being done at the moment in the way of public works than Mr. Lloyd George seems to realise, and a large programme on the scale he advocates would only be possible if it were undertaken for the purpose of giving employment and not because the works were intrinsically useful. That relief works are really in his mind was shown by his remark to the Council of Action saying that the Government guarantee of £35,000,000 to the railways for electrification would be more valuable if the work were to be done in the Distressed Areas instead of near London. The "Next Five Years" Group, on the other hand, state plainly that "no informed person ever supposed that public works alone" "could solve the unemployment problem", and that "a substantial reduction of food imports would have the effect of preventing the desired increase in exports". That group nowhere adopt an attitude of great optimism about un-

employment, and this is the more impressive a criticism of Mr. Lloyd George's anticipations because they give guarded support to many of his proposals.

About 40 per cent. of the unemployed are in receipt of standard benefit. In any conceivable system there would be men unemployed for short periods, and they are adequately provided for by the Unemployment Insurance Fund. It is this category of men which has benefited most from the improvement in trade. The problem of the Distressed Areas arises from the concentration there of a large proportion of the 453,776 persons whose unemployment has lasted more than a year. No normal revival of trade is likely to give them regular employment again, nor would any programme of public works, confined to what is economically productive or socially necessary, provide them with work. We must accept as a fact that until the population has greatly declined, all those who seek it will not be able to find work.

This, however, is no cause for despair. We have all become so accustomed to regarding unemployment as an evil, because of the poverty it entails, that we have come to regard work as an end in itself. But work is not a good, it is an evil, dating only from the expulsion from the Garden of Eden. It is fantastic that we should regret our ability to maintain and improve our present standard of living without compelling the whole population to toil. The advance of science has been so rapid as to present us with blessings which we do not yet know how to use, but do not let us regard what is a blessing as if it were a curse. Instead of puzzling how to find unnecessary work for the unemployed, let us seek so to allocate idleness as to convert the noonday blight of unemployment into the eventide of earlier retirement.

The proposal for earlier old age pensions has frequently been made before, but has not survived scrutiny for two reasons. In the first place it has been designed to absorb immediately a large number of the unemployed, and consequently and in the second place it has involved an impossible burden on the Exchequer. It is the main thesis of this article that nothing will *immediately* cure unemployment, and that steps even in the right direction *must* be slow. The modest proposals here

made for earlier pensions will, therefore, appear disappointing to many people.

It may be worth while first to indicate some of the difficulties. A pension for every adult at 60 of 20s. per week and of 35s. for a married couple would cost a fantastic sum, and even if restricted to insurable persons would cost the prohibitive sum of £279,000,000. It is obviously necessary, therefore, to think of a much lower figure such as 12s. 6d., and to make the payment of this pension below 65 conditional upon retirement from industry. There is here still a dilemma. If everyone accepted it, the cost would still be intolerable, in the region of £36,875,000 ; if the smallness of the pension would make it unattractive to all except perhaps the unemployed and to people with some savings, the vacancies created in industry would be comparatively few. A moment's thought will also show that the offer of a retirement pension of 12s. 6d. under 65 would necessitate the raising of all contributory pensions and probably of non-contributory pensions to that level. It would, therefore, be necessary to pay an increased pension to a very large number of persons, and a number increasing annually, in the hope of persuading a few elderly unemployed to go out of the labour market. The following is an estimate of the cost :—

	£
Contributory pensions of 12s. 6d. to persons of 60 to 65	36,875,000
Extra cost of 2s. 6d. increase to pensioners of 65 to 70	4,800,000
Extra cost of 2s. 6d. increase to persons over 70	10,000,000
	£51,675,000

This figure, formidable in itself, would increase annually by £1,333,000 on account of the increase in the aged population. When the existing cost, also annually increasing, of the various pensions scheme is remembered, it will be seen that the Exchequer could not possibly bear this burden.

Surely it is possible to approach the matter from another angle. What is needed is machinery so flexible that it will be able to proceed step by step as money is available and not

attempt to deal with *all* men over 60, will deal with individual cases and not merely with age categories, separately with different industries and districts, and can derive funds from other sources than the Exchequer. A man should be pensioned under 65 solely on the ground that he is redundant to industry. Whether he is or not will depend partly on his age, partly on his health, partly on the industry to which he belongs, partly upon the district where he lives. His suitability for a pension should be a matter of administrative discretion within certain wide limits. If once this is conceded, it is obvious that the Unemployment Insurance Fund is interested when men are taken off its hands directly or indirectly, and it can fairly be called upon to contribute towards the cost of doing so. A more difficult problem arises where a man is the responsibility of the Unemployment Assistance Board. If he has no means and is in receipt of assistance, his allowance will be more than 12s. 6d., and he will naturally not wish to take the pension. (Incidentally it may be observed that a system which provides grants sufficient for maintenance up to 65 and a pension on a far lower scale thereafter is an anomaly which cannot last permanently.) In cases, however, where a man or the household in which he lives comes under the Means Test, it may suit him to take the retirement pension not subject to the test, and the Unemployment Assistance Board should contribute towards the pension whatever it had been allowing for his maintenance.

These considerations suggest that a statutory authority might be set up to administer the Contributory Pensions Fund in close co-operation with the Unemployment Insurance Statutory Committee and the Unemployment Assistance Board. Like the Committee just mentioned, its first obligation should be to maintain the solvency of its finances; subject to that overriding obligation, it should aim at withdrawing from industry on retirement pensions as many redundant workers as possible. It might, for example, begin by issuing an order that it was prepared to consider applications for retirement pensions from all men of 64, and in the Distressed Areas and the coal industry from all men of 63, and it would then proceed to adjudicate upon the claims in the light of the applicant's National Health and Unemployment records, of the proportion of aged workers

in his industry and the industrial prospects of his district. It may be argued that this would involve an enormous administrative problem, yet the same kind of task has been undertaken for centuries by the Poor Law Authorities and has now been centralised under the Unemployment Assistance Board. It may be argued that pensions should be a matter of right and not of discretion; but the very purpose of this suggestion is to substitute a realistic consideration of whether a man is redundant to industry for the political controversy as to the age at which every man should become an old age pensioner.

A scheme of this kind prepares the way for allocating leisure without running any risk of financial disaster. There is a strong case for the Exchequer accepting the additional burden of £10,000,000 to increase the maximum old age pension at 70 to 12s. 6d. per week. At present the 10s. pension is often supplemented by Public Assistance Committees by 2s. or 2s. 6d. per week; an increase of that amount would not therefore increase in those cases the charge on public funds, and it would put upon the shoulders of the country a burden that now presses hardly on poor areas. It would help to check the increase in the number of persons in receipt of out-relief which is largely due to the increasing proportion of our population which is over 65.

An increase in contributions to the Unemployment Insurance Fund of 3d. per man and 1½d. per woman would bring in a further £6,000,000 per year. Of this, £4,800,000 would be needed for increasing by 2s. 6d. the pensions to persons of 65 to 70, leaving £1,200,000 available for pensions under 65, in addition to whatever is made available from the Unemployment Insurance Fund, the Unemployment Assistance Board and any grant the Exchequer may be able to make. Any fall below an unemployment figure of 14½ per cent. of the population would, of course, make these figures more favourable.

At the same time some limitation upon the flow of juveniles into the labour market is desirable. It was right to keep the school-leaving age at 14 until the number of children in the schools has begun to decline, but now that there are vacant places and the number of vacancies will increase annually, it is desirable that during the next ten years, when juvenile

unemployment is likely to be of increasing gravity, the schools should keep some of the children not wanted by industry indoors and off the streets. The demand for juvenile labour will vary greatly in different parts of the country, small in the declining, great in the developing areas. Strangely enough, there is danger of a shortage of young skilled labour in certain trades during the years that juvenile unemployment is likely to be at its worst. The necessary flexibility could be given by adopting the proposal made in both Lord Eustace Percy's and Sir Percy Harris's Bills to allow any child who had a firm offer of employment or of apprenticeship to leave school at 14. By making this flexibility provision apply only till 1950, the educationists who demand the raising of the school-leaving age for all children on educational grounds would be assured of the introduction of their reform at a definite date.

Much has been said of shortening the working day in order to absorb more labour. There would obviously be little theoretical objection to this if individual weekly earnings were reduced so as to prevent an increase in the cost of production. While organised labour on the Continent is apparently willing to consider this, British labour is not. It would appear that reductions in working hours will have to be introduced industry by industry, step by step, and this tendency will probably so intensify the use of labour-saving machinery that its effect upon employment will be negligible. The steady reduction in working hours which has been taking place for nearly a century will continue, and indeed if it were otherwise scientific progress would hardly be worth while. The shorter working day is desirable on broad social grounds, but it will not greatly help in solving the unemployment problem.

The National Government should not claim to have any programme which will solve unemployment. That solution will only come about when population has adjusted itself to new conditions of trade and new locations of industry. It must, however, show itself to be aware of what the future offers to Britain both of good and ill. A policy of complete *laissez faire* would no doubt bring about the necessary adjustments in the long run, but slowly, wastefully and with much suffering. The wise policy would seem to be one that hastens, guides and tempers these natural adjustments.

A NEW DEAL FOR IRELAND?

By Hugh A. Law

WRITING in this Review some two years ago, I gave to my article the title: "Ireland in the Doldrums". In the doldrums she has since remained, our little ship drifting slowly along through an uncharted sea, its crew listless, its provisions running perilously short. Almost the only event to break the monotony of these last few months was the Coal and Cattle Agreement concluded last January between H.M. Ministers in Great Britain and the Irish Free State; and this chiefly because it was then believed to be the forerunner of other agreements of a more comprehensive sort, and also for the light it shed upon the economic interdependence of the two islands and upon the extraordinary consequences resulting from interference with the normal course of trade. Here were two key industries, each peculiarly sensitive to world-wide depression and each accustomed to find a ready market for its products in the neighbouring country. Suddenly a political quarrel arises. The Government of the Free State refuses to hand over the Land Annuities. The British Government claps an all but prohibitive duty on Irish livestock. Mr. de Valera retorts by placing five shillings a ton on British coal. Thereupon the respective exports drop approximately 50 per cent. Five thousand miners are deprived of wages; a much larger number of farmers—notwithstanding the grant of bounties at the expense of the Irish taxpayer—are left with unsaleable cattle on their hands. The miners go on the dole; the farmers are at their wits' end to meet their obligations for annuities, rates, wages and other current expenditure. After nearly two years' suffering all round, the Free State agrees to purchase a million tons of British coal half-yearly; Britain to permit the importation of another 150,000 head of Irish cattle. But, the political quarrel continuing, the penal duties are still

maintained on either side. Consequently although the British coal exporter now enjoys a virtual monopoly of the Irish market—of the 1,200,000 tons imported between February and July all but 1,000 tons being certified as of British origin—the Irish consumer is still obliged to pay a tax originally imposed in order to exclude British coal altogether.

When we consider the other half of the bargain, the whole affair looks still more like a very bad practical joke. For not only do the duties on Irish livestock remain in force—which means in effect that the Irish farmer is paying his land annuity twice over, indirectly to the British Exchequer and directly to his own—but for each additional head exported by him the Irish taxpayers as a whole must find an additional sum by way of subsidy, a sum estimated as between a quarter and half a million pounds annually. Thus John Bull has undoubtedly got the best of this particular bargain. Nevertheless, like the shrewd man of business he is, he might perhaps be well advised to consider whether the impoverishment of his neighbour is likely in the long run to be to his own advantage. Even today, in spite of hostile political sentiment and ever multiplying tariffs, the Free State is, per head of population, among the largest importers of British goods ; while the market potentialities of a friendly and prosperous Ireland are incalculably great. On the other hand, the danger of a complete breakdown, financial and economic, is real.

There are many signs that, to use a country phrase, we are getting very near the toe of the stocking. Already six months ago the chairman of the Bank of Ireland drew the attention of his shareholders to the " gradual encroachment on savings to meet current expenditure which has become noticeable in recent years " ; while other bankers used almost identical words in dealing with the reports of their branch managers. It is, indeed, only too clear that hundreds of the most substantial and industrious farmers are at their last gasp. Though organized resistance to payment of land annuities has ceased, the sum of uncollectable arrears, which on March 31st, 1934, stood at £300,000, had risen a year later to £800,000, and is now probably well over £1,000,000. Forced sales at ruinous prices are sadly common. Only the other day I had word of the sale of the

sixty head of cattle belonging to one unfortunate, at an average price of twelve shillings and sixpence a head. Thus the resources from which future payments of any sort can be made are becoming hopelessly mortgaged. Already it is more than doubtful if the present annuities can ever again be collected in full, whatever government be in power in the Free State; so that we may soon find—as happens so often when two parties begin to fight over a piece of property—that the property itself has disappeared before the quarrel comes to an end.

It would be natural to infer that growing realization of the disasters attendant upon Mr. de Valera's policy must have led to a revulsion in popular opinion. But that would be to forget how completely the old balance of parties in this country has been upset by the adoption of universal suffrage and by the growth of a semi-communism among the less responsible sections of the people. For electoral purposes Mr. de Valera can afford to neglect the more substantial farmers and land owners. His strength lies among the uneconomic holders of the West, the agricultural labourers in South and East and the poorer townsfolk; and these for the time being find themselves in many instances quite as well off as before. Himself a strange blend of idealist and wire-puller, he has contrived to appeal simultaneously to two contradictory passions: self-sacrifice and self-interest. Under his leadership great numbers of people can plume themselves on their readiness to sacrifice everything for their country, whilst comfortably assured that sacrifice will, in fact, only be required of those whom they have been taught to despise as Imperialists and to envy as better off than themselves. If the price of store cattle has been halved, the smallholder finds compensation in the moneys earned on relief works or received by his sons as unemployment pay (under Mr. Cosgrave's régime, it may be remembered, there was no "dole" to be had in the Free State). Similarly, if agricultural wages have fallen, the aggregate receipts of a labouring family are not necessarily diminished; since the odds are that at least one of its members is receiving public assistance in one form or another. What with grants and subsidies, free or cheap beef distributed at the public expense, unemployment pay, widows' and orphans' pensions and a vigorous housing policy

—by far the most creditable achievement of the Government—a quite considerable proportion of the population probably thinks its own relative well-being to be bound up with the continuance of Mr. de Valera's ministry. Nor can one leave out of the account the interest of a small but influential group of highly protected industrialists or of the numerous officials appointed to administer the new social services—or the ex-" irregulars ". Mr. de Valera has succeeded, if not in spreading wealth, at least in bringing all classes nearer to an equality of poverty ; and, God knows, many have hitherto been so poor that one has not the heart to grudge them their advance towards a higher standard of living. Only it remains to be seen how long a system based upon lavish grants from a not inexhaustible Treasury can continue, and what will happen if and when the leprechaun's crock of gold is at last exhausted.

Meanwhile, the existing Government appears to be more securely established than when it assumed office. The municipal elections of 1934, though fought upon a register generally regarded as unfavourable to Mr. de Valera's followers, reproduced in local bodies almost exactly the balance of parties then existing in the Dail ; while in the Dail itself the net result of the two Parliamentary by-elections of June last was to give Fianna Fail, for the first time in its career, an absolute, if tiny, majority independent of Labour. In other directions Mr. de Valera's success has been at least as remarkable. General O'Duffy's secession and the consequent schism among the Blue Shirts has inevitably discouraged the Opposition. The Senate, which has hitherto acted as a brake upon Mr. de Valera's more extravagant proposals, is soon to disappear. The very existence of the Governor-General, peacefully marooned in a Dublin suburb, is all but forgotten. The Irish Citizenship Act has in the eyes of Irish, though happily not of British, law deprived Irishmen resident in the Free State of their status as British subjects ; while, even more remarkably, the Aliens Act defines an alien as " a person who is not a citizen of Saorstat Eireann ". Henceforth, so far as the wisdom of our rulers can compass it, we are to regard as aliens not only Englishmen and Scots and inhabitants of the other Dominions of the Crown, but even those of our own kith and kin who live outside our

borders. So St. Patrick himself, were he now resident in his own Primatial see of Armagh, would be liable to challenge at the Free State frontier and might, at the pleasure of the Minister for Justice, be subjected to the pains, penalties and restrictions on entry, residence or departure duly provided under clause 5 of the Act "for the control of aliens"! Thus Mr. de Valera has now all but reached his proclaimed objective: the removal of every institution and every symbol inconsistent with Independence and a Republican form of government.

From these facts I draw two conclusions: first, that if the progressive impoverishment of Ireland and deterioration in Anglo-Irish relations are to be checked, a "new deal" is essential; and, secondly, that if the attempt is to be made at all, it had better be sooner rather than later. The time is full of peril; and I see no reason to expect that the next Free State General Election will have such results as to deprive Mr. de Valera of further capacity for mischief.

Moreover, though some whose judgment I respect think otherwise, I do not myself believe it possible now—if it ever was—to isolate the economic part of the problem. No doubt some further fraction of the lost trade of each country may be recovered by agreements resembling the Coal-Cattle Pact; but we shall be little nearer to that reconciliation of Irish with British sentiment, without which there can be no assurance of prosperity in Ireland or of peace within the Commonwealth. Many of us fondly hoped that such a reconciliation would be effected by the Treaty of 1921. We were mistaken. Mr. Pakenham's recently published *Peace by Ordeal** has enabled us to see more clearly than before just how the arrangements then made were vitiated from the first, partly by the preceding partition of Ireland in 1920, partly by Mr. Lloyd George's disastrous last-minute ultimatum. Mr. de Valera himself has since said frankly that Dominion status had proved itself in practice much more favourable to Irish liberty than he had believed it to be. But he and his followers are as far as ever from accepting it as the free choice of the Irish people. Next time then—if the gods grant us a "next time"—there must be no plausible ground for talk of a dictated settlement. Nevertheless

* Noticed in the July issue of this Review.

—we have to realize this also—the path is beset with difficulties. Simply to recognize a Republic in Southern Ireland (as rumour says the English Labour Party is inclined to do) would be to betray thousands of His Majesty's loyal subjects in this country, and this without any assurance of permanent peace. For Mr. de Valera—to do him justice—has never denied that his real objective is the creation of an All-Ireland Republic.

Again, I cannot think that schemes for the federation of Ireland with wide powers allotted to the component states—ingenious and attractive as these schemes are—have any immediate future. Twenty, even fifteen, years ago something of the kind may have been practicable; fifty years hence, if all goes well, it may be practicable again. Today, even if the South were willing, as it once was, and may perhaps still be, to forego theoretical Independence for the sake of a United Ireland, the North is in no humour to relinquish her present place as an integral part of the United Kingdom. Ancient political and sectarian feuds apart, Belfast is hardly likely, in these days of world-wide quotas and tariffs, willingly to exchange a free market of forty million people for one of three and a half.

These things being so, I can see no way of escape, unless it be through some such scheme of the "external association" of the Free State with the other peoples of the Commonwealth as Mr. de Valera has more than once hinted at, as offering a means of reconciling the sovereign independence of Ireland with the larger purposes of the British League of Nations. It is plain that this idea was never seriously considered in the negotiations of 1921; nor is it likely that the Imperial Parliament could at that time have been brought to accept any further loosening of the theoretical bonds of Empire. But much has happened in the interval. Since the passing of the Act of Westminster the gap between Dominion Status and External Association has narrowed to vanishing-point, and the substitution of "reciprocal" for "common" citizenship would do little more than bring constitutional terminology into greater accordance with constitutional practice. I do not forget Mr. de Valera's references to a "foreign king" or his ungracious abstention (so shocking to loyal feeling here as in Great Britain) from the Jubilee celebrations. But it is to be remembered

also that in first putting forward his plan of External Association, he proposed that Ireland should recognize the Crown as "the symbol and freely accepted head of the Associated States". We are here in the realm of such abstractions as are dear to his mind—a mind at once subtle and sincere, crudely passionate and apt for fine distinctions. He would die rather than acknowledge the duty of "allegiance" to a "foreign king"; yet, once his own peculiar view of things is accepted, may well be found ready to give far more than has been asked of him. Did he not in 1921 even suggest that Ireland should contribute an annual sum towards the civil debt? Nor do I believe that Republicanism, except as a symbol of national freedom, has any hold on the Irish people. All their older traditions, all their hereditary instincts, are opposed to it. In the Civil Wars of the 17th century, during the whole period associated with the story of the Wild Geese, their ancestors fought and suffered for the idea of personal monarchy embodied in the House of Stuart. Only among the Presbyterians of Ulster was the Rising of 1798 inspired by the new-fangled doctrines of Republican France. Irishmen have still in their bones the old spirit of the clan. That bloodless Whig abstraction "the Crown" makes small appeal to us; and loyalty in the only sense we can understand it—devotion to the person of a monarch—is very sick for lack of sustenance. How often in her private letters did the late Lady Augusta Stanley deplore with remarkable insight Queen Victoria's aversion from either visiting Ireland herself or allowing any member of her family to do so! Were it even now possible for the King or the Prince of Wales to be seen and known among us as they are seen and known in Great Britain, I would wager that Republicanism would soon be as dead as the Heptarchy.

Alas! the day for such thoughts is past. We must not look for this year's birds in last year's nests. The best we can now hope is that, under new symbols, the spirit of Commonwealth unity may be saved and healing time strengthen it. The substance of Irish freedom is no longer in question. What is in question is the mode of its expression. If the Free State were tomorrow to secede from the Commonwealth, nobody supposes that one British soldier would cross the northern

border or one British ship blockade an Irish port. Nor is it in the least probable, despite the light-hearted threats of Mr. Thomas, that Irish-born subjects of His Majesty resident in Great Britain would be deported wholesale. But inevitably the ancient enmity between English and Irish would take on a greater bitterness, Anglo-American friendship would again be jeopardized and in Ireland itself those who are most friendly to Britain have to choose between a life of exile and one in which they would find themselves regarded as outcasts by their own countrymen. It is for these, above all, I am concerned. I think of those thousands, both gentle and simple, whose most cherished possessions are the medal ribbons which recall Irish valour in the Peninsula and the Crimea, in Flanders and Gallipoli, in Mesopotamia and the Frontiers of India; and I ask that their past deeds and present loyalties may not be altogether forgotten in the final casting up of accounts between the countries they have equally sought to serve.

Perhaps it is already too late. Perhaps Mr. de Valera, having got so far on the road to an isolated Republic, may be unwilling or, even for domestic reasons, unable to call a halt. Perhaps British statesmen, conscious how tenuous already are the links of Empire, will shrink from establishing a precedent which may well appear of perilous consequence. Yet so great an authority on Commonwealth Law and Practice as Professor Berriedale Keith appears (if I do not misread some of his later writings) to favour the idea of external association, if, like myself, only as an alternative to acquiescence in the establishment of an isolated and inevitably hostile Republic. That at least is how it appears to me, a Nationalist Irishman, who desires neither to renounce my allegiance nor to remove from my country.

ENGLISH LECTURERS IN AMERICA

By S. K. Ratcliffe

I.

MR. RUDYARD KIPLING, writing in 1896 to Major James B. Pond, the monopolist lecture agent of New York, made this surprising statement: "America is a great country, but she is not made for lecturing in". "You forget", Mr. Kipling explained, "that I have already wandered over most of the States, and there isn't enough money in sight to hire me to face again some of the hotels and some of the railway systems that I have met with". Forty years ago these reasons were cogent enough; they would seem absurd today. But the interesting point about Mr. Kipling's declaration is that it came at a time when English authors and travellers, preachers and politicians, were learning from the experience of some of their number and with the aid of Major Pond that America was wonderfully made for lecturing in. The later years of the nineteenth century were the heyday of the English author-lecturer in the United States. He and his fellows were enjoying remarkable opportunities, and they provided much material for discussion and satire. In course of time they came, Rebecca West has said, to be treated as "a standing joke—rather like mothers-in-law, or kippers, or the Albert Memorial". And, like those, they persist.

English lecturers continue to cross the Atlantic, and when they happen to be authors they have one reason above all others for doing so. American publishers urge them. Westward the course of literary empire takes its way, notwithstanding the ominous spread of autarchy. The American market for books becomes ever more important, while the temptation of the films is unremitting. The English novelist with a large public tends to make his second home in California, and on the way out or home he does some lecturing. Further, there is a continuous, though varying, demand for European speakers

on current affairs. The platform is not a declining force throughout the wider English-speaking world. We may, therefore, usefully devote some little attention to its character and influence, under the older conditions and the new.

The English lecturer has been touring America for rather more than 100 years. I believe the actual pioneer was James Silk Buckingham, a missioner of several causes, who went over soon after he had founded the *Athenæum* and failed to make it go. Buckingham was untiring. He visited all the States; he had attractive subjects and, unlike the majority of the literary men who followed him, he was an orator, both natural and trained. There is an interesting letter from Emerson to Carlyle, written when Carlyle was harassed by the thought of his own poor prospects in London. Emerson gave some particulars of his own modest earnings as an itinerant lecturer. We need not be surprised that the figures he cited did not tempt his friend away from Chelsea. Among Victorian writers it was Thackeray who set the transatlantic fashion. He made two lecturing tours in the United States (1852 and 1855). The first, soon after the publication of *Esmond*, yielded about £2,500. Dickens, in 1842, did not go to lecture and, not unnaturally, he avoided making plans for America so long as the memories of *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *American Notes* were fresh. But in 1867 he went across to give the famous series of dramatic readings from his own books. He was a startling apparition, not typically English in dress or style. He was accorded a triumph such as no European man of letters has since approached. He performed in a dozen cities, cleared nearly £20,000 and fatally undermined his health. No contemporary author could have rivalled Dickens as a public attraction, but there were a good many English writers who would have been warmly welcomed and comfortably rewarded when peace came after the Civil War, if any organization for booking their lectures or readings had then existed. For this they had to wait until the 1880's.

The field was curiously interesting. It was dominated by the American Lyceum, an institution which had no exact counterpart on our side of the Atlantic, although the provincial cities of England would not have found it strange. The Lyceum

has aroused a good deal more than its proper share of ridicule, for, after all, it was a natural development in a pioneer continent with scattered communities and a relatively high standard of living. These communities, of course, were the nurseries of the vast reading public of today. English authors in the nineteenth century had an enormous vogue in the United States. The absence of international copyright was a source of constant irritation, since in the case of the writers of universal popularity (Dickens, again, being the most conspicuous example) the American sales yielded no result to the authors. Pirated editions, none the less, meant a vast audience, and that among a nation which wanted to know its favourites as actual persons. It was noted that portraits of the Victorian poets and novelists were far more common in American houses than in English. Puritan America, moreover, was particular in the matter of entertainment, and a people that took knowledge seriously could hardly do other than develop an educational lecture system. The Lyceum, whether in small town or larger centre, was not satisfied with merely local or makeshift speakers. The times were big with change; the people were eager for almost every kind of mental stimulus. Tickets for the lecture course came regularly into the budget of the family, and it was a noteworthy feature of America, with its tradition of democratic culture, that the most prominent men in the country were ready to play their part. The Lyceum offered a platform to nearly all the intellectual leaders, as also, in the age of Reform, to many public characters who combined picturesque oratory with the advocacy of moral causes.

It was suggested by some English wit, after the invasion of America by the first contingent of English lecturers, that a bust of James B. Pond should be set up in Westminster Abbey with the inscription: "It is he that hath made us and not we ourselves!" Pond was a Middle Westerner who had honestly earned his military title in the Civil War. A man of characteristic American energy, he had the smartness and pleasing impudence of a Mark Twain character, and there was no man in the world whom he would not attack with a business proposition. The lecture bureau that he made famous and international was taken over by him from James Redpath,

an Englishman from Berwick-on-Tweed, who had been the first to organize Lyceum lecturers and is said to have been the inventor of the newspaper interview. Pond had been in the game a few years when he made his two-fold discovery: first, that the demand for speakers and good entertainers was increasing just when the established favourites were fading out, and, secondly, that the colleges and lyceums were ready to pay for lecturers and musicians from Europe. Pond was a churchgoer and a connoisseur of sermons. The popular American preachers of the time were nearly all lecturers. It was therefore natural enough that he should turn his attention first to the English church. He arranged successful tours for Dean Farrar and several other fashionable churchmen of the time. But, although he thought highly of pulpit oratory, Pond's serious ambitions lay in other directions—among men of action and men of letters. And it was through him that the second noteworthy period of transatlantic lecturing began with one eminent Victorian who might well have been regarded as the last possible recruit.

Matthew Arnold went to America in 1883 and—amazing though it sounds—he delivered one hundred lectures under Pond's management. "Nobody ever heard them, not even those sitting in the front row", the Major wrote. This statement was demonstrably untrue, for on the next page we have a description of Matthew Arnold's taking lessons in elocution and thereafter reading his manuscript "in a loud monotonous voice". He made a considerable sum of money. Pond was sure that he must have been seriously in need of it, "or he would never have allowed himself to be subjected to so ridiculous a spectacle". The need was there, as we know, for Arnold's family burdens were heavy. His letters show that he was resolved to look on the brighter aspects of an experience that was not only arduous but humiliating, for the author of *Culture and Anarchy* could not reconcile himself to labels on train reservations for the "Matt Arnold Lyceum Troupe". It was a distressing episode, and stories about Matthew Arnold are still told in America.

Pond was an honest as well as a capable manager. His failures received their rightful share under the contracts, and

it is pleasant to note that the Major recorded a good number of English successes, with a few resounding triumphs. He had a thorough liking for the English novelists of the 1890's. Marion Crawford, Anthony Hope, and Conan Doyle were for him a very satisfactory trio. They were not only accomplished lecturers, but were scrupulous in business matters, good companions, and — a most essential point — contented railway travellers. Pond said that he would have given higher terms to Conan Doyle for a hundred nights than to any Englishman he knew. Israel Zangwill he found brilliant but difficult. Sir Edwin Arnold, of *The Light of Asia*, was the first English versifier to capture American audiences with readings from his own stuff. The two men who stood highest in Pond's esteem for combined platform success and financial profit were H. M. Stanley, after the Congo journey and the expedition to Emir Pasha, and Dr. John Watson (" Ian Maclaren "), the kailyard novelist. The Major had no fault to find with either; he thought them first-rate. And yet he died a disappointed impresario. He aimed at the highest. He knew that Americans would have paid anything to hear the English orators who were deemed by pious Victorians to be supreme. But Gladstone and John Bright were alike beyond his reach, and he was snubbed by the one preacher whom he put almost in their class— C. H. Spurgeon.

Pond and his celebrities belong to a time far away from ours.* But it would be true to say that the conditions of American lecturing, and especially the relations between lecturer and agent, remain substantially as the Major left them thirty years ago—except that the contract bearing romantic sums of money is now extremely rare. The agents keep their scouts in England and on the Continent. The American platform is offered to almost every public man who, as they say, has made the front page. A prominent statesman in any country is fair game. As a matter of course invitations are sent to every conspicuous explorer and discoverer, to the flyer, the mountain-climber, the man-at-arms. The successful novelist or dramatist is given his chance as soon as the reviewers and

* His reminiscences make an entertaining volume, *Eccentricities of Genius*, London, 1901.

columnists have made him known. The platform tends to follow the head-lines. The chairman of a programme committee gets tips from the interviewers. American political opinion is jumpy, and yet societies of the most conservative tint are ready to invite the revolutionary and to pay handsomely for the thrill he brings. If Trotsky could get past the Commissioner of Immigration he would command high fees and address enormous audiences. Legal ostracism may be an asset, as Mr. John Strachey found last winter, and a touch of scandal might have its uses—as when Dr. Maude Royden was banned by certain Methodist ladies in Chicago because of the rumour that she smoked an occasional cigarette.

During the past twenty years the scope of the American platform has been immensely broadened, in relation especially to international affairs, and to political and economic issues. The colleges and clubs, the business-men's associations and popular forums, the churches which increasingly devote Sunday afternoon or evening to addresses on public questions, invite a speaker in the first place because of his special knowledge of the subject chosen. If that subject is controversial, so much the better; the committee and the audience take for granted that it will be presented as to an adult gathering. The curious old warning, traditional among lecture societies in England, as to keeping off religion and politics, would sound ludicrous in America. Roughly speaking, the whole field of knowledge and current thought and nearly all the great movements of civilization are open for statement and discussion; and the custom nowadays is for the lecture to be followed by a question period. It may not be longer than fifteen minutes, but is not unlikely to be fifty, and I do not see that an audience is asking too much when it expects a visiting speaker to stand the barrage with patience, readiness and good humour. It is a pleasure to record that in my experience the representatives of Britain frequently come out of the ordeal with high credit. Many times during the winters since the War I have enjoyed a busman's holiday in New York, Boston, or Chicago, and have watched with admiration the intellectual play of an English speaker under fire —Sir Herbert Samuel and Sir Norman Angell, for example, Mr. Bertrand Russell, Sir Frederick Whyte, Professor Zimmern,

Dame Rachel Crowdy, Mrs. Mary Hamilton—to name a few of those who have done the round again and again.

There are countless small differences between England and America in relation to lecturing, and at least two larger differences worth particular note—first, the American practice of paying a speaker from a distance on an economic, and occasionally on a lavish, scale; secondly, the very large number of towns and cities in the United States which are able to invite foreign lecturers, and the relative fewness of those that are obliged to assume that men and women of renown are beyond their reach. A small-town society will as a rule get the speaker it wants and will cheerfully put up the money. The lecture list of a modest town in the Middle West would seem ambitious to the Literary and Philosophical Society in a great British city; the subjects chosen would probably lead an English secretary to say that a similar venture by his committee would mean a heavy deficit. I have before me a winter list from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and one of the Town Hall series in Detroit, Michigan. Either would do credit to a metropolitan centre. A balance is kept between American and European names, and the organizer of lectures in any remote town will tell you that the audience demands in every course a majority of lecturers from the great world. A few seasons ago, for instance, I was going through Texas. In every place on my itinerary, down to Galveston on the Gulf of Mexico, I had been immediately preceded by Bertrand Russell and the Abbé Dimnet. The largest halls were needed for both of them.

I come now to an aspect of this business which to many participants, or victims, is highly important—to some few of them so important that when talking of lecturing in America they seem unable to think of anything else connected with the enterprise. I mean the journeys, the hospitality, and fatigues. Long and frequent journeys, of course, are common to all itinerant speakers who undertake to cover any large section of the American Continent. It is foolishness for anyone to venture into the American lecture-field if he cannot face three or four spells of 500 or 1,000 miles without an interval, or if he is broken down by, say, five successive nights in the Pullman sleeper. Hospitality, however, is not so simple a matter. It

may involve complexities more or less serious; but the main thing to be said about it is that not two lecturers in North America will have similar experiences in respect of the balance between staying in hotels and being welcomed in private houses. The daughter of an eminent statesman, for instance, confessed, on her return from a first visit to America with her father, that her greatest disappointment had been over this very point—she had seen almost nothing of American homes. It depends upon all kinds of things—upon the speaker himself and his associations, upon the States and cities he goes to, whether he is travelling alone, what sort of arrangement he makes with his agent, and I think also not a little upon his status and the nature of his lecture subjects. The novelist or dramatist, for example, should expect almost everywhere a different reception from that accorded to a member of Parliament. If I am not mistaken, the literary lecturer, more than any other, is likely to be embarrassed by the invitations showered upon him in the great centres. They may be rather exacting. He must nerve himself for the afternoon affairs that are oddly labelled literary teas. His fountain-pen will be continually in his hand. The public-affairs speaker, on the other hand, finds himself at public or group luncheons and dinners where, when not announced to speak, he will probably be expected to answer questions on his special subjects or in some other fashion to make his contribution. And quite right, too; indeed, altogether fair and civilized and, for the friendly and interested traveller, thoroughly enjoyable. There are, one knows, speakers who wish to be treated as lecturers and nothing else. Their notion is that they have made a contract to perform a certain task, the fees not having been fixed with any reference to works of supererogation. That, of course, is a point of view, and in some cases personal reasons make it necessary for strict conditions to be laid down and respected. But I should say, and with some little emphasis, that the lecturer who finds it irksome to adjust himself to a constantly changing scene and to meet numbers of people, and so is obliged to conserve his energies, may know in advance that he was not intended by Nature to travel the American circuit.

But, it may be objected, journeys, lecturing and social en-

gagements cannot be other than an oppressive burden, and the demands of audiences, of interviewers, and casual acquaintances, are merciless ; the upshot must be an insupportable fatigue. How about that ? Well, these things are undeniably so ; they have been enlarged upon by many sufferers, and for several well-known writers of this generation they have provided a deal of picturesque copy. Sir Philip Gibbs in one of his post-war novels, Mr. Cecil Roberts in his half-way autobiography, Mr. Compton Mackenzie, the anonymous though unmistakable author of *The Golden Falcon*—these and others have painted the ardours and endurances of the English lecturer in America rather as though they stood for purgatory. And one other writer I will mention here, because, in a recent article, she has stated a serious case—Miss Vera Brittain.* Some of the people responsible, Miss Brittain says, regard the lecture itself as fulfilling the obligation altogether :

> Others apparently consider themselves entitled to purchase the lecturer—body, soul and spirit—from the time that he enters the city until the moment that he leaves it—usually by a midnight train, after lecturing for one hour, answering questions for another, and autographing his books for a third.

Add " the reporters everywhere demanding a story, which might be anything but the right kind of publicity ", the orgy of handshaking, the disposing of a vast correspondence, and we have a picture of the lecturer's trials, needing only one detail of the woman's special burden to make it complete—the constant packing and unpacking of suit-cases, in an effort " to modify in her listeners the excusable American belief that all English women are homely and dowdy, addicted to heavy tweeds, large brogues, and thick woollen stockings." This last point must, I think, be serious, for it stirred Miss E. M. Delafield last year to more than one moving if comical plaint.

From Sir Philip Gibbs to Miss Brittain, I confess, the record of hardships and perplexities passes right over my own head. I have observed many men of distinguished endowments doing the round with contentment and sometimes with gusto. Mr. G. K. Chesterton on his second tour wrote joyously of the American small town, its people and ways. Mr. John

* " Listeners, English and American", by Vera Brittain. The *Atlantic Monthly*, July, 1935.

Masefield, in the last year of the War, went through a tremendous " skedyule " of one-night stands. The lamented George Russell (A. E.) carried himself easily through two long tours—happily reading detective stories in the Pullman and pouring out his rich talk between engagements. Mr. Bruce Lockhart, of the *British Agent*, writes to me :

> I found that by regarding my tour as a job for which I was being well paid, and by trying to do that job as well and as graciously as possible, I had no difficulty at all. American audiences are very responsive and very indulgent to anyone who is trying to give his best.

That is a good word. I write as one having a long and regular connection with the lecture platform in North America. I believe, indeed, that among living Englishmen there is only one with a more extensive experience of the work, season by season, than mine—Mr. John Cowper Powys, who did twenty-five years' service before turning his extraordinary energy to the writing of Glastonbury and other romances. The journeys, of course, are impossible for people of other than tough physique; but American railroads, and particularly the transcontinental trains, are excellent, while the modern American hotel has attained a standard of comfort and convenience which appeals to the hardened traveller because he knows it is to be relied upon. (The " standard ", I am aware, is precisely what not a few Europeans object to !). Nor can I, after more than twenty winters, look upon a day as unduly exacting if it happens to contain a night journey of 300 or 400 miles, a morning or afternoon lecture, a press interview, a club or college luncheon, a drive round the city, and an evening with friends or new acquaintances eager for the discussion of European and American doings. That strikes me as, on the whole, a capital day for a man who in his own country is accustomed to the rigours of the journalistic craft.

HISTORIC HOMES

By Philip Carr

THERE are signs that the public conscience is at last being gradually awakened to the importance of preserving the ancient private houses which contribute so much to the beauty of the English country and are the setting of so much of the tradition of its fast disappearing social amenities. The National Trust is doing excellent work in keeping this sense of responsibility alive and also in practically organizing the necessary activities connected with the saving of historically and artistically valuable properties from deterioration and even disappearance. But, as the Secretary of the Fund wrote on August 15th to *The Times* in reference to the additional powers of action which the Trust is now seeking from Parliament, powers are of little use without the means to use them.

How are these means to be obtained? No doubt they can be furnished to some extent by the subscriptions consequent upon that increase of membership of the Trust for which the Secretary appealed in the letter above-mentioned. But it will at once be realized that the amount which even a considerable afflux of new members would produce would not go very far in providing for the acquisition of old houses, whose present owners can no longer afford to keep them under changed economic conditions and may be forced to consent to a sale which will be followed by the destruction of the buildings. That such important architectural treasures as Montacute House and the Bath Assembly Rooms should now be under the protection of the Trust is a great thing; but the burden upon the funds which the administration of these two properties alone is admitted in the last report to constitute shows what resources are needed even to nibble at the edge of the problem.

Moreover, the objects of the National Trust are not confined to the preservation of buildings and still less to the preservation of private houses; and its report shows that 168 of the properties

owned or controlled by the Trust are " places of natural beauty ", as against only 69, which are " places of historic or antiquarian interest ", which latter, in turn, include such monuments as Stonehenge and the Roman baths at Wall, and, even after deducting these, comprise very few private houses still in private occupation.

For here, it seems to me, is the essence of the matter. Valuable as it may be to save buildings from destruction for the sake of their architectural interest, what would be most valuable of all would be to preserve fine old houses, not as dead shells, from which all life has departed, but as living things, which continue some at least of the purpose for which they were built.

How is this to be done ?

In so far as it is already done today, it is achieved through the individual sacrifice of those who spend, upon the upkeep of the ancient houses which they own, moneys which no longer come to them from the rentals of the lands attached to these properties, but from other sources, whether these be urban ground rents, general investments or professional and business earnings. This individual sacrifice is sometimes made from motives of fidelity to family tradition and honour, sometimes arises from a sense of solidarity with the life of a little community which would otherwise break down, and is sometimes inspired entirely by the enthusiasm which a new owner who has acquired possession of an old house feels for its architectural beauties and historical associations. Such is the case of a lady to whom a certain Tudor manor hall in East Anglia belongs. She has bought it, she has saved it from destruction, she lives in it and allows many friends to share its graces with her ; and she has decided that after her death it shall pass to the National Trust, in order that there may be some guarantee that the house and gardens shall remain intact for the enjoyment of other generations.

Not every owner can be expected to show such public spirit ; nor, if it were universal, would it serve the special purpose to which I am drawing attention ; for, although the National Trust do in fact leave some of the properties which they own in private occupation, universal public ownership is not the ideal. But perhaps the hope can be permitted that a means of equitably

distributing the burden may be devised. This might be a system of triple co-operation between the community, as a public duty ; the wealthy owners, as ransom for the privilege of holding so rich a heritage from the past and for the good fortune of being able to afford to keep it without loss ; and the many individual visitors, as tribute in return for the pleasure which the survival of these houses as living things can give. And this co-operation might result in the creation of a fund from which subsidies to less wealthy and less fortunate owners might enable them to stand out against heavy loss and might save them not only from handing over places of architectural interest to destruction or abandoning them to decay, but from breaking up what yet survives of a social organization which has been part of England's history.

It will be seen that the essence of the suggestion which I am trying to make is something more than the preservation of buildings and the handing of them over to some form of public ownership, although to attain that in itself would be much. It is the preservation of something at least of the life of what, since their creation, have not been public buildings but private homes. And the suggestion is made, not in the interest of those to whom the homes belong, but in that of those who will visit them, and who, unless they still exist as homes, will learn or understand hardly anything of their beauty, their function or their meaning. It is not vulgar curiosity alone which makes a passing glance at the private apartments, where today's morning paper can be seen dropped across the arm of a chair, far more interesting to the tourist in a great house than the leisured contemplation of the furniture massed behind the silken cord in the ballroom. It is that the places in which people live are alive. Even the un-lived-in rooms of a castle where the family is living have a reflected life, and are more interesting than those in a castle which is deserted.

Any scheme which involved the giving of assistance to a small body of owners of private property would be in danger in a democratic country, if it demanded that the assistance should come from public funds alone. There is no reason, however, why private owners who at their own expense perform a public duty in keeping in existence and in repair something of historic

and artistic interest to the public should not have some claim to assistance from the State, or at least—which comes to the same thing—to a remission of some of their public burdens. This claim should be considered quite apart from the general plea of landowners that the heavy burden of Death Duties is making it impossible to keep country estates together ; for it may well justify its title to stand even if the general plea is disallowed on grounds of public interest, and its standing would not prejudice the general plea in one direction or in the other. The special exoneration would be granted, not to the owner of a country estate as such or of a country house as such, however ancient the tradition of the one or the building of the other. It would be granted only to the owner of a house which would be declared by a competent authority to possess an interest both architectural and historic, and in cases where that interest had not been or was not being destroyed by the owner or his predecessors ; and its proceeds would have to be applied exclusively to the maintenance of such interest. It is within these limits alone that the claim is made here, and within these limits I submit that it can be defended upon public grounds. At the same time, the demand is the more likely to find favour if it can be shown that the limited number of people who care for these things—the owners of them and those who go and look at them—are contributing directly to the support of what they admire.

Hence the suggestion for the triple co-operation—the State for one part, the wealthier owners for another part and a small payment by every visitor to every place of historic interest for the third part, this payment to go, not to the owner of the place visited, but to a central fund, from which would be distributed assistance towards the upkeep and repair of historic places whose owners are not wealthy.

The thing would naturally involve a certain sacrifice of privacy. In a federation of all the owners of historic homes, some, who never throw their houses open to the public now, would have to do so, at least occasionally, for the good of the cause and the benefit of the fund. But would not the sacrifice be worth while ? Not only would it provide resources which would perhaps make it possible to save much that would otherwise be lost and could not be replaced, but in removing the

reproach that treasures of art and architecture are jealously guarded behind private doors and gates and withheld from the eyes of those who morally have a common right to the nation's artistic inheritance, it would create the impression that the owners of these treasures consider, after all, that to some extent they hold them in trust for the community.

It may be objected that the field has already been occupied, that the claim has already been pegged by charitable funds; and the list in *The Times* every Saturday of the private gardens all over the country, which are opened for a small fee and the proceeds handed to the Queen's Institute of District Nursing, shows indeed that advantage has already been taken of the natural desire of ordinary people to see what beauty can be created by those who have time and money. But that need not prevent the existence of a co-operative organization among owners of historic houses for the purposes of what they must surely see has become a very urgent need of common self-defence.

It may also be objected that there are insuperable practical difficulties in the way of the creation of such a body.

There, however, I can show proof to the contrary. For if it has not yet come into being in England, the thing has been founded and is rapidly becoming established in France, although much of its declared purpose remains yet to be fulfilled.

The problem is not quite the same as in England. In some respects ancient buildings are more effectively protected there than here; for very many houses, and even simple architectural features—such as a fireplace or a doorway—in houses, are scheduled or *classés* as *Monuments Historiques*, after which these buildings or these individual features may not be altered, even by a private owner, while their maintenance in repair is undertaken by the State, within the limits of the public funds allotted for the purpose, which, however, in many cases are notoriously insufficient. In other respects the private owner of an historic house is worse off than in England. First, the Napoleonic laws of inheritance oblige a property to be equally divided among the direct heirs, and it is sometimes difficult to keep it together, unless families are deliberately limited to one child, as they so often are, for this very purpose, in the upper classes. Secondly,

the owner of a *château*—the word in French covers what we should call a manor house—has rarely inherited, at the same time, extensive urban properties, whose revenues may help him to keep it up, as he sometimes has in England. He may possess buildings in towns; but he will not possess town lands which are leased to those who have erected buildings upon them and will eventually return to him increased not only in their general urban value, but by that of the buildings which stand upon them; for in France almost every owner of a building is also the owner of the land on which it stands. Thirdly, the owner of or heir to an old house has at least as heavy a burden of special taxation upon that house and estate to bear as in England and at least as little relief in consideration of any outlay which he may have made from his private means towards keeping the architectural and historic character of the place in existence.

So there has been formed an association whose title, *La Demeure Historique*—the historic home—aptly expresses its purpose, which is the one that I have already indicated of keeping ancient houses in existence as normally inhabited places. It aims at the triple co-operation of public authorities, of private owners and of the crowd of individual visitors which I have suggested; and a certain measure of that triple co-operation has already been achieved.

Owners of ancient châteaux all over the country have become members of the Association, and have subscribed, many of them liberally, to its funds. This membership has resulted in many famous private houses, which have never yet been accessible to visitors, being thrown open—most of them every day at certain hours and others on certain days of the week—and if the small fee charged for these visits is not always handed over, in its entirety, to the Association's funds, this is always done with that portion of it which is represented by the fifty-centime (roughly 1½d.) stamp of the *Demeure Historique*, which is stuck on to the entrance cards. Consent to add this stamp and its value to the entrance fee has also been obtained in certain cases from local authorities in regard to monuments which they own. This has been done, for example, at Tours, Amboise, Loches, Chinon and Blois in the famous château district of the Loire; and it is hoped that a similar step and a similar contribution to

the funds of the Association will be made in the case of buildings owned by the State when the repeal of the present law, which makes an addition to the entrance fee impossible, has been secured.

Funds which have been obtained from these various sources have enabled the *Demeure Historique* to make contributions in money towards the urgent restoration of architectural treasures such as the Tour de l'Horloge at Amboise, for which 10,000 francs were given, and towards the public purchase of others, such as the château of Plessis-les-Tours, for which the sum contributed was 40,000 francs, and by these examples to stimulate municipal and individual subscriptions.

The tourist activity promoted by the opening up of private châteaux has shown railway companies and other organizations directly interested in this traffic that it is worth while to support the *Demeure Historique*, which in its turn has assisted in the organization and local federation of various bodies—archæological societies, automobile clubs, chambers of commerce and so forth—which in various ways would welcome or could assist the visits of tourists.

As regards government action, the *Demeure Historique* claims—though as yet without success—that the work which it is doing is of sufficient public interest to entitle it to the official recognition and to the subsidy which, even when it is only nominal in amount, is given to so many organizations of an artistic character in France. On the other hand, it hopes by persistent agitation to obtain a revision of the inheritance laws and a relief from taxation for those who spend money on the upkeep of the ancient houses which they own, while it already takes credit for having secured the removal of the entertainment tax from the entrance fees charged for visiting such houses.

To give a list of the châteaux which have already been made available for visitors by the *Demeure Historique* would be merely to supply a long catalogue of names which would be meaningless unless a guide-book description were added to each. It may be said, however, that this list includes at least twenty places which are easily accessible from Paris, fifteen more which may now be included in a tour of the already well-known châteaux of the Loire and at least another eighty which are spread over twenty

different Departments of France ; and additions are being made to it every day. In it are to be found such famous names as Courances, Grosbois, Maintenon, La Palisse, Sully-sur-Loire, Montbazon, Tanlay and Ancy-le-Franc. The complete roll, with particulars as to the days and hours at which each château is open, may be obtained from the enthusiastic and indefatigable moving spirit of the *Demeure Historique*, Dr. Carvallo, from its office in Paris, which is at 33, Faubourg Saint-Honoré. A careful study of this roll, with the assistance of a Michelin road map, should enable any motorist to add enormously to the interest of a tour.

This is what has already been done and is in course of being done in France, where the problem of saving the many beautiful old châteaux which still survive is recognized to be so urgent that it was said the other day, when the Château de Champs, once the residence of the Marquise de Pompadour, was presented to the State, to be used as a French Chequers, that there were probably three thousand château-owners who would be glad to make a similar gift for the sake of honourably relieving themselves of the burden of upkeep and taxation.

Can nothing of the same kind be done in England, where the problem is hardly less urgent ?

YOU CAN'T STEAL MY THUNDER

By Jane Lessing

MRS. SMITH laid her shopping bag on the kitchen table with relief. It was heavy with her week's supply of provisions and she was beginning to feel the strain of carrying now. It was only another week, and she did not think she would go beyond her day this time. With her first child—born when she was scarcely twenty, within a year of her marriage to George—she had been a fortnight overdue, but her last three had arrived right up to time. This would be the thirteenth. She was forty-three now, and Maggie—her eldest—already twenty-three.

Twenty-three and not married yet—nor likely to be, her mother sometimes thought. Things were different these days, girls earned too much money. Maggie was smart enough, no one could deny, and clever with her fingers. She could copy the fashions she saw at the pictures so that you could hardly tell the difference. She earned good money, £2 10s. a week, at one of the big furnishing firms. She had learnt upholstering at the trade school and they had soon promoted her to manageress of the workroom, so that even after she had given her mother a pound for her food and board, there was plenty left for bargains of remnants picked up on the stalls at the open-air market on Friday nights at the Roman Road. And she certainly made the best of herself and enjoyed life. There was never a Saturday night when she had to pay for her own seat at the cinema.

But sometimes lately her mother had been a little anxious. Times may change in many ways, but at bottom life was much the same, and it was time she settled down—though God knew what they'd do without her pound. Two of the boys had left home, but that still left twelve mouths to feed with George and herself.

There was her own money—22s. a week as a rule, representing

six mornings of charring at 10d. an hour. Sometimes she would do an odd afternoon's work, too, and it would be a little more, but there was enough to do at home—what with the cleaning and cooking and washing and mending—so that it could not be often. The last month or two she had put in quite a number of extra hours trying to make up for the fortnight she would earn nothing and to help pay for all the extra expense. It took a lot of thinking to make it all go round. There was George's money, of course, but somehow since George had ceased regular work he seemed to look on what he received from the dole as a kind of present to himself. He no longer handed her the whole amount as he used to do in the old days with his wages, but kept back seven or eight shillings for his own use. Still, there was Fred earning 10s. a week now as errand boy, and somehow she contrived to manage. And now there was only another week at most.

She began to open the parcel she had laid beside the shopping bag and took out a pair of coarse cotton sheets. She spread them out on the table and sniffed with pleasure at the smell of the dressing that had an agreeable assurance of " newness ". Going to the old deal chest of drawers in the corner beyond the range, she opened the bottom drawer. It was so full she had to take out the things and rearrange them before the sheets would go in. There was another pair at the bottom and four pillow-cases, all brand new. Four nightgowns—white cotton with embroidery round the neck and no sleeves. She looked at them with a little smile of excitement and a pleasurable sense of guilt. She'd never had short sleeves before, but she had seen them on the stall and they had been such a bargain. Would George notice ? And what would he think if he did ? And a dressing-jacket of pink flannel with blue stitching and one blue with pink stitching. And the things for the baby. These were not new, but were all carefully mended and washed.

Was the drawer heavier than she thought or was it the kneeling posture ? A sudden sharp pain pierced her side. It was nothing, of course, but she would put the kettle on. A nice hot cup of tea was what she wanted after all that traipsing round the stalls. The range was only lit on Saturdays for the bath and the week's baking, so she put the kettle on the gas ring and began to unload her basket and put the provisions away. Two little parcels wrapped

in green paper brought a sudden smile that banished for a moment the look of unconscious strain. A bottle of eau-de-cologne and a tin of bath powder. They had been an extravagance—sixpence each at Woolworth's—but she did not regret it.

She set them before her on the table as she sat and drank her cup of tea, strong and hot and sweet with the two spoonfuls of demerara sugar she had put in. She felt it doing her good and settled down to enjoy a daydream.

She was a big, rawboned woman—spare but powerfully made. When she had gone to a new place at Mrs. Hemmings', six weeks before, it had already been obvious that she would be in a position to " oblige " for only a limited period. She walked with that slightly forward carriage of the hips that suggested at once the difficulty she was beginning to feel in maintaining her burden and the naïve pride she had in acknowledging it.

The new mistress had been reminded for a moment of the old Dutch picture of the burgher and his expectant wife, but in Mrs. Smith the decorous modesty was altogether wanting. Mrs. Hemming had enquired, out of humanity, if she were sure she ought to be working, but her doubts were put to rest by the broad smile of mingled contempt and pride at the mention of her condition. With the great hip-bones and broad full bosom exposed to their fullest advantage by the tight navy blue skirt and grey cotton blouse, the flexed muscles of the arms beneath the rolled-up sleeves, the thick, firm column of the neck below the wispy hair twisted into a teapot-handle knob at the back of the head, she was like a powerful mare, bred equally for stud and labour. Mrs. Hemming demurred no more. After all, it was nature, and she was badly in need of extra help in the nurseries now that Nanny had two children to see to.

Mrs. Smith poured herself a second cup of tea. She found the strong, sweet liquid put new heart into her.

In a week now she would be all safely tucked up in bed with the new sheets and pillow cases and a nightgown with no sleeves. George would have to sleep in the kitchen on the old sofa as he did last time. For all the rest of the weeks of their lives it was his comfort and the children's that had to come first. Up to the last moment she would work and slave for them all, but with the call of the first real pain she would down tools and quit with a

quiet conscience. This fortnight of her confinement was hers—hers to enjoy to the full the luxury of rest and attention. When the first three or four children came she had not made the most of her opportunities. She had beset herself with fretting over the new baby and the older children—had worried over George, and consumed herself with anxiety as to whether he would remain faithful to her through a whole fortnight of discomfort and abstention.

But that was all long past. Nowadays she looked upon this fortnight as a holiday earned by right. It was her own money that had paid for the contents of that bottom drawer. Everything in it was hers, and it was all new. That was why she never washed the sheets and pillow-cases before they were used. The smell of the dressing gave a luxurious reassurance that they had never been used by anyone else.

It was true there was the pain to be gone through first. But each time the labour was shorter, and in any case there was the prestige of having the whole household's attention concentrated on her and the nurse to wait on her and help her. She would hear everyone running up and down and fetching water and towels and anything the nurse wanted—and know it was all in her service. And when the worst came, she would not have to be patient any more, but could scream till they could hear her all down the length of Paradise Alley, and the neighbours would turn to each other and say, " Poor dear : it's her thirteenth ! "

And after it was over the holiday would begin. She would have the bedroom to herself with her curtains and covers all clean and ironed. In the morning the nurse would come and set her to rights and bath the baby. There would be a clean smell of soap, and the pillows would be turned fresh and cool. They would bring her nice things to eat. And this time there would be the eau-de-cologne and bath powder that she had never had before.

And then George would come in and see her. He would stand at the end of the bed with his hair brushed, looking a little sheepish, and after a few stilted sentences he would give her a peck of a kiss on her forehead and hurry away. He was always shy at these times, and she was glad. It was a sign that he realized her as she was. Not his to work for him and be possessed at his will, but someone who had to be considered and even pampered—a sort of

queen in her way. A hint of gracious condescension crept into her smile as she thought of it.

And in the afternoon, after her nap, the full glory of her day was reached. She would sit up in the pink dressing-jacket—or the blue ?—and her neighbours would call one after another and bring her a few flowers or a bit of fruit.

After a day or two the room would be full of flowers and she would sit up among it all and tell them all the details of her labour. And they would all have to listen and pay attention. And they would admire the baby and say how like its dad it was. Not that she cared much about that these days. There were plenty of children like George in the neighbourhood. One more or less did not seem to be either here or there.

She drained the last of her tea and ate the sugar from the bottom of the cup. The back door had slammed. It would be the children back from school. She must send Rosie up to Mrs. Tomkins to fetch the baby or she'd be getting uppish about minding it again.

But it wasn't the children. It was Maggie. Her mother stared at her in astonishment. It was nearly two hours before her time, and she was standing there just inside the door in her smart black coat with the fur tie without a word. Her face looked thin and strained beneath the jaunty hat set on one side of her permanent wave. The line of the mouth was a painted streak across the grey skin—a streak a little awry, it seemed. And she—she was standing queerly, in a strained angular attitude, holding to the door as if in support. Something in the way she stood brought her mother suddenly to her feet with a primitive intuitive sensing of the trouble.

" What's the matter with you, my girl ? " she asked. There was a hardness in her voice that asked solely for information and made no pretence of sympathy. " Out with it, whatever it is. Have you lost yer job ? "

But she knew it was worse than that. Maggie came into the room and sank into a chair. All her bounce and pert self-confidence were gone. Her smart clothes looked merely tawdry. Looking up at the generous competence of her mother's powerful frame, her own body seemed peaked and insignificant. She was afraid.

" It's not that. I fainted ", she said.

Her eyes shifted before her mother's dissecting gaze that seemed to slit the cheap stuff of her fashionable coat and leave exposed to view the pitiable body beneath, with its poor little secret at last out. Her hand flew to her face as if to ward off a blow or to blot out the sight of those eyes.

But Mrs. Smith had no thought of striking her ; none at all of pity. Her one thought was to know the when and the why. She sank back on to her chair. She asked, with the same threatening attitude, " And when's it coming ? "

Maggie's self-control gave way utterly. There had been little room for religious teaching, little enough for moral precepts, in that overcrowded alley that had been her world. She was young and she had taken the good times that offered. She had meant no harm. But now some deep sense of shame overwhelmed her at the confession she had to make before her mother's sculpted symbol of fertility.

" I don't know—I don't know ", she sobbed. " It 'll be soon, I think."

Mrs. Smith got up and turned from her. Her whole swollen body was strong and flexed with the energy of her anger. It was not moral indignation that moved her. At any other time she might have felt contempt for the shallow playing at sex. At any other time pity for that frightened inadequate creature might have blotted out even the sense of shame and contempt. But not now. Now it was a volcanic eruption of purely personal anger that rose from some hidden depths and poured flame and destruction on all the habitual constraints of her life. It had all the power of an undivided primitive force—strong in the blindness of the unreasoning urge to its own fulfilment.

It was not her daughter that sat shrinking there before her. It was a rival to the satisfaction of her need. Hunger she had known and satisfied. Sex need had been satiated with years of the habit. She continued to yield herself to her husband rather in a spirit of generous indulgence to the child in men than for any personal need. Even the maternal instinct had grown cold by over-fulfilment.

But this other need was a thing that grew with the years and strengthened with every engulfing circumstance that

threatened its rare indulgence. The need to be, for however short a time, of supreme importance in her world—to live for a little while in a dream world of power and queenship which, in the days that must succeed, would ward off a little that suffocating mass of endless detail and routine.

And it was to be taken from her. This girl before her, with her modern skimpy frame and undeveloped chest, she must choose this time of all times to play the dingy comedy. And she probably did not even know which of the boys she went with was the father ! It had meant nothing to her. She had not loved. She had used her sex as a mere plaything. And the child that was to come. She had made no preparations. There was no drawer of new sheets and pillow cases bought with hardly saved silver. Not even garments for the child. Even the fact of her pregnancy she had managed to conceal. It was scarcely discernible even now. She had thought of nothing but herself—felt nothing of all that had made her mother's life.

And it was she who was to steal her thunder. She to whom everyone's thoughts would turn. There would be talk—endless talk and excitement. And it would be a first baby. And hers was only the thirteenth. When they came to see her, no one would bother to think whether it was like its mum or its dad. It would be Maggie's child they would talk of—and who it was like—its father—which father ?

She lifted herself heavily from her chair, leaning her weight on the table. One hand unconsciously gripped the tin of bath powder—gripped it like a weapon. The other in a clumsy movement swept the bottle of eau-de-cologne from where it stood so that it fell with a sharp knock against the corner of the fender. The air was slowly permeated with the fresh, pungent scent of the perfume.

It filled the room and Maggie watched her mother, suddenly still, breathing it into her nostrils, breathing it deeper and deeper. The scent of it was like a deep joy, a joy that sunk into her and reached its culminating ecstasy in the deeper, rending pain that now swept her body and told her her hour was come.

She stood there, massive and misshapen, with the rending pain of travail and the ecstasy of triumphant fulfilment twisting the contours of her face ; a conception that lifted her far out

of the girl's comprehension. She waited for the full, deep satisfaction of that pain to pass before she turned to her daughter. She smiled at her. She could afford to smile now.

" Go and fetch the nurse and ask her to let the doctor know ", she said. "And send Rosie up to make the bed."

Without a word Maggie obeyed.

Her mother drew herself up. She went to the chest of drawers and with difficulty pulled out the lower one and began to take out the things that would be needed—a pair of sheets, a pillow-slip, the clean covers for the dressing-table, a nightgown, the little mended baby's garments. Everything necessary was there.

Then she went to the fender and with difficulty stooped to pick up the broken bottle. There was a little of the scent still left in the lower half. She put it carefully on the table.

And then her body was suddenly stricken with a new pain that brought the sweat in great drops to her forehead and left her powerless to resist or think. Slowly her great bulk yielded it possession and she sank inert upon the floor.

She died next day at midnight. For a few hours she had lain, conscious of the darkened room and hushed voices, the smell of new sheets in her nostrils. She could not see whether they had remembered to put clean covers on the dressing-table. There were no visitors, but George came for a moment and brought a bunch of violets. She smiled weakly and he had put them in a vase much too large. They looked pathetic and awkward. He went out soon. She saw his hand fumbling in his coat pocket as he went out at the door. He was feeling for his pipe.

The funeral was on the Wednesday. There were flowers enough now—wreaths and crosses all white with black-edged cards tied on. All the neighbours had liked her, and they were now piled up in the parlour. The children crouched in the kitchen in hastily acquired black—the neighbours had seen to all that—and peered through the cracks of the door.

And as the men in their tall black hats lifted the coffin down the stairs, a cry came from the bedroom overhead—the first bewildered scream of a woman in childbirth.

But Mrs. Smith did not hear it. This was her hour, not

Maggie's. There was a child's cry, too, somewhere in the house, but it did not matter. She was lying at her ease, dressed in a new white nightgown, being borne downstairs on the shoulders of six tall men in black, out to the carriage she was to occupy alone. They would heap up the flowers all round her till you'd almost think it was a queen's wedding for the show they'd make. And there would be carriages to follow and black plumes nodding on the horses' heads—and she would ride slowly, slowly down the street.

TO J.M., DANCING

Your hands have rituals as old as springtime.
Your hands are birds, climbing the stairs of air.
Your hands are flying silver fish escaping
From what faint shadow of what threatening, where?

FATE'S EPITAPHS

ON ANY MAN

I let him find, but never what he sought;
I let him act, but never as he meant;
And, after much mislearning, he was taught,
Tired, to be content with discontent.

A. S. J. Tessimond.

EBB AND FLOW

A Monthly Commentary

By Stephen Gwynn

THESE are uneasy days for Europe. In France, where I have spent the month of August, people at large, not politicians but the ordinary folk, were thinking of war as a near possibility ; not as a thing to be planned for or against but simply as an approaching menace. They are thinking of aerial bombardment, and, still more intensively, thinking of a collapse in currency ; wondering what is the best way to make what small savings they have secure against chances ; and they do not see an easy answer. Signor Mussolini's drastic way of dealing with private property well in advance of war's outbreak has powerfully impressed their minds as an example that other Governments are likely to follow. As for a will to war, there is no trace of it ; yet will to prevent war does not exist either, for the thing seems as far from control as a tornado. All the ordinary man or woman can do is to study the barometer and think out precautions to avoid total ruin.

The Mood of France

Events pivot upon France ; and in the French Press one is impressed by a most unusual reserve and wariness. England means so much to France that tongues and pens are restrained. Even when that unlucky episode of the concession to an Anglo-American combine (as it was wrongly called) was sprung upon the world, French journalists held in their comment, though the temptation to malicious irony was unusually potent —and there is none which Frenchmen find it harder to resist. What does break out again and again is the taunt that, if the

League is today inefficient and unorganized against breaches of its pact, England more than any other power is to blame, for England decided the defeat of France's proposals to organize collective security. None the less England's good faith is recognized, and England's earnest desire to keep in step with France. But, as Frenchmen see it, to have peace in Europe France must work in concert with Italy as well as with England, and that seems so difficult as to be scarcely possible. In short, nobody is hopeful for the joint efforts of M. Laval and Mr. Eden; but everybody welcomes the fact that their co-operation is close and earnest.

France (and probably all Europe) is perplexed by the spectacle which in this crisis English Socialism offers. Clément Vautel, whose pen is for France something like what Low's pencil is for England, comments with amusement on Mr. Lansbury's utterances. The head of a Socialist party proposing that the Pope's intervention should be invited and even besought, is to him incredible. How should a Socialist have any truck with the head and centre of clericalism? But, for that matter, is it less surprising, he suggests, that a Socialist party should press for a joint effort of the nation, using its armed force. In France, Socialists apparently only want to use force against their fellow-countrymen; and so M. Vautel's bewilderment over Mr. Lansbury turns to admiration.

The Powers of the Little Entente have taken counsel together, and after their meeting, M. Stoyadovitch, president of their joint assembly, came to Paris to renew contact, and presumably to decide on lines of co-operation. All this is easily intelligible. But it is not so easy to understand why there is so little said of Germany. Certainly it is not because Germany is forgotten. People construe Italy's demonstration of military strength on the Tyrolese frontier as a warning to German ambitions in that quarter; this has been so obvious that French commentators did not think it necessary to underline its significance. But I have seen no discussion of what might well happen in other directions if Italy were once inextricably committed to her great venture in a difficult country overseas. In such a juncture, would it be easy for Herr Hitler, even if he should desire it, to refrain from utilizing the opportunity in some direction?

His people have learnt to look for advance in Czechoslovakian Silesia, and in Lithuanian Memel. If it be true, as the news from Germany suggests, that there is internal division caused by the continued aggression of Nazi energies upon both Catholics and Protestants who refuse to have their religious freedom disciplined by Nazi drill sergeants, then the temptation to some form of action which would unite all Germans in a common ambition becomes very strong.

Germany's Eastward Thrust

It is clear that both France and Italy ardently desire to maintain co-operation between their countries. A German push in the Tyrol or in Austria would at once consolidate their efforts; and probably the backing of the English fleet would follow as a corollary. But all French statesmen must perceive that an eastward-moving Germany might have very different consequences. Is Italy (that is to say, Signor Mussolini) seriously concerned for the prestige and power of Czechoslovakia, which involves the power of the Little Entente? It is not easy to believe it. If France found her allies to the East of Germany threatened, France could not count on Italy's assistance in protecting them. Could she count on England's? England has been and perhaps still is extraordinarily sensitive to the appeals of German nationalism; and English sentiment would sympathize in some measure with German claims to treat either Memel or Silesia as part of Germany *irredenta*.

Altogether, troubled waters in Europe present far too many attractions for the fisherman, if the fisherman is one of the Have-Nots. The established order can be maintained if those who desire to ensure it against alteration by violence will act together. But this is only possible if Europe is regarded as a whole; if England, for instance, will treat an aggression on Memel or Silesia as if it were aggression upon some part of British territory. These newly-established powers, Succession states, are in truth wards of the League of Nations, and if England's prime concern is to be maintenance of the League, their security should mean more to England than that of Abyssinia, for which England seems ready to thrust her hand into the fire.

So far as I understand the attitude of British opposition parties, it is that the maintenance of armed forces can be justified only if they are available in defence of righteousness. And Great Britain has evidently made up her mind that in this quarrel Abyssinia's plea is just. Italy's formidable indictment at Geneva might have done something to shake that conviction, but England has no trust in an accuser who frames his charge and will not listen to the case for the other side. Such a pleader is, in English opinion, self-condemned.

Might Behind Right

Meanwhile it seems that Signor Mussolini's remarkable magnetic powers have completely mastered the undercurrents of resistance to this adventure and that he has the national pride ardently with him. Preparation for war skilfully launched has been a political device of great value for internal appeasement. It is not a new lesson, but this fresh instance of its application is not likely to be lost on Herr Hitler. In Germany, those who know the country report that enthusiasm is very definitely less than it was a year ago; though still today criticism of the Nazi régime is only uttered in confidence behind closed doors. But there is also a growing financial stringency and even some sign of actual scarcity in food. Above all, one of the great deterrents from war does not exist in Germany today. Nobody saves, for nobody has the least confidence that what is saved can be kept. A nation so disposed has the gambling spirit; for the fear of losing possessions is much more masterful than that of losing life. The moral is that, if Mussolini takes the risk of war, Herr Hitler will take it also in some other quarter—unless the very powerful military organisation behind him thinks the chance of success too small.

If England is really prepared to run all risks in defence of the League against aggression by Italy upon a member of the League, it should be made plain at once that she will be equally ready to run them against any other aggressor. Given that assurance, the German General Staff will think twice before taking even the most promising opening. They would not begin to think at all, if English power to protect the institution whose maintenance is the sheet-anchor of British policy were greater than it is today. According to some critics, even the

naval strength has been allowed to drop to a point at which Great Britain can no longer assert mastery in the Mediterranean even against Italy, without sacrificing security elsewhere. Madness lies this way. If, while the greatest continental nations maintain universal military service as a proud proof of their freedom, England chooses to regard exemption from this duty as the very definition of liberty, then sea supremacy becomes essential to English security. In this reckoning, the navy of the United States may be left out; but in the European field England's naval strength must be such as to offset completely her territorial weakness—unless her pretensions to be a Great Power are to be set aside.

—and Italian Prowess

One unfortunate feature in the situation is that England has difficulty in believing that Italy will offer determined resistance to the declared will of England, in a word, could put up a fight against England. The military history of the Great War in its Italian phase is little known to Englishmen. Caporetto is remembered, but the successes which finally counterbalanced that disaster took place when every thought of English minds was concentrated on the last phases of the struggle in Germany. It is not realized in England how magnificently the best Italian troops fought, under a government certainly ill-qualified to conduct war. It is not guessed how much a good leader can do to animate all the Italian forces to the spirit and the prowess which the best of them displayed.

The Consequences for Geneva

At any rate, Geneva is not yet an obsolete and negligible theatre; and the public opinion of civilized Europe exercises a force which it would be stupid to ignore. But for the existence of the League Italy would have pursued her purposes in Abyssinia without let or hindrance, except for what pressure France might have attempted for diplomatic reasons. England certainly would not have stirred a finger. But, as it is, the horror of a return to war, and the conviction of its insanity, are felt throughout Europe—and of course in America also, though the United States by its own choice has no effective voice in these concerns.

These feelings are nowhere stronger than in England, and by its membership of the League England has the right and the duty to take action. So have the other States, where the feeling is equally prevalent; but in England, owing to the nature of English institutions, private convictions have more means of inducing public action. The result has been a mobilization of moral forces which Italy has tried to scatter by disdain. They have not been scattered, and the course of events at Geneva has shown Italy reluctantly modifying the arrogance of her attitude. The display of disapproval for Italy's course is too widespread and too impressive to be negligible.

Of course there is a risk in such display. If, when moral forces have been mobilized on this scale by the means which Geneva has afforded, Italy calls the bluff and nothing happens, the result must be a *débâcle*. Unless settlement of some peaceful kind can be attained, action of some repressive kind must be taken, or the League as it exists will founder in a tempest of ridicule. That would be the end of a League which meant nothing but the expression of pious opinions.

Yet even in that case, one might hope—one might even expect—the formation of a new League with obligations for action binding on the members whom it admitted, so as to convert the protection against war which it offers into something less precarious, and to give us a world which shall be better policed.

All this was written before Sir Samuel Hoare's speech at Geneva marked what may be a turning-point in the history of the League. It shattered an idea which was gaining ground that Mr. Eden, "this terrible young man with a passion for peace," was only an individual voice, not the accredited spokesman of British policy. Now the Foreign Secretary takes his stand beside his younger colleague; and behind both is that most typical of Englishmen, Mr. Baldwin. M. Laval, following them, accepts solidarity with England in defence of the League's vital principles—even if it jeopardizes friendship between the two great Latin powers. But, just as Sir Samuel Hoare's speech emphasized that, if Britain is to take risks for peace on the Continent, the risks must be shared by all, so M. Laval—though less explicitly—intimated that this case cannot be treated

as exceptional. If the Covenant is to be defended, it must be defended wherever there is aggression. The solidarity which can defend peace must be a solidarity on which Europe can count, whenever and wherever the strong seek to override that justice which is due to the weak. All the small nations must be able to feel that they are under the ægis of those powers which accept a new order of civilization.

Mr. de Valera in a notable speech put the case for the small nations. His utterance was the more impressive because it ranged Ireland in support of a cause where England has assumed the leadership—and this at a time while a sort of " economic war " drags on between England and Ireland. He spoke the best that was in him, and his speech will be welcome throughout the British Dominions, because it comes from the Dominion which has—to put it moderately—least identity of feeling with Great Britain. But it was also a plea that the existing demarcations, whether established at Versailles or elsewhere, must not be taken as final. And indeed we have a clear admission from Sir Samuel Hoare that, if satisfaction is denied to Italy in Abyssinia, satisfaction for Italy's essential needs—and not only Italy's—must be thought out and sought out elsewhere. That is a step towards a new and larger justice as between nation and nation in the Society of Nations.

The Guinea Stamp

William Watson's death awakens the sort of reflections that are fitting to those who aim at an official rank. Just as Lord Curzon attained large successes yet died disappointed because he was never Prime Minister, so William Watson's life has a pathetic incompleteness because he never attained to be Poet Laureate. Nobody feels about John Morley or Edward Grey or F. E. Smith as everyone must feel about Curzon, because these men were concerned with the realities of their work and not with the official mark. Of course, the supreme position carries power more completely than any other. But one feels about Curzon that he wanted to be able to say to himself, I have been Prime Minister. He wanted the power also, but not less he wanted the guinea stamp. Watson wanted recognition for his work as a poet, and in all essentials he had it. What he

lacked was the title, which could add nothing to the quality of his achievement. Yet in a sense it was natural that he should feel baulked, for he was cut out to be Laureate almost as perfectly as Tennyson. His thought was not extravagantly individual, but he could give individual distinction to thoughts upon public affairs which were common to the serious minds of his time. The literary forms which he used, the moulds into which his thought was cast, were traditional ; he inherited them from Wordsworth and Shelley, adding, as Tennyson did very largely, and Matthew Arnold much less markedly, a new accent of his own. But essentially his verse presented nothing difficult or unfamiliar to anyone who was at home with the English poetry of the nineteenth century, in which what began as a revolt ended as an academic tradition. Matthew Arnold also was no innovator and yet no one denies that he added greatly to the poetry of his day. In the last ten years of last century, the culminating Jubilee period of Victoria's reign, some at least of the best judges would have put Watson already on a level with Arnold. One may even say that the most authoritative organ of critical finish made him its laureate. He was *par excellence* the poet of the *Spectator* when Hutton and Townsend's joint editorship was at its height of reputation ; and, if ever an Englishman understood English poetry, Hutton did. Watson appealed to men like Hutton, to those whose ideas Hutton expressed in excellent prose, by the high seriousness of his work, by its unstinting finish, and by something lapidary in the mould of his thought. He could sum up a critical judgment on a poet of the past and give it the lyrical lift which turned it into poetry. He could express that generous impulse of the English race which flames into anger at wrong inflicted on another people—that spirit which is now moving England into perilous courses, and which in 1914 decided England's intervention in the war. Watson's denunciation of " Abdul the Damned " was perhaps less considerable, and less lasting because in that case the impulse had not power enough to become effective. Still, as examples of fine rhetorical verse, these poems will always be read with appreciation. But I think that the man was most completely himself, when his song celebrated earth's nuptial periods—in his April Ode, when

" half the world a bridegroom is and half of the world a bride "—or in a poem less generally remembered, which appeared first in the Yellow Book, and is perhaps the most successful example of English verse adapting to its uses the elegiac couplet. " Now when earth's vernal impulsion makes lyrical all that has language," is the fine opening of a lyric period which goes on to depict the " Tremors and coy upheavals, reluctances, sweet agitations ".

Fashions in Poetry

Watson's poetry is not the kind now in fashion. He will, of course, pass through the usual period of oblivion which follows on the death of a man who has been writing for many years; and at present the taste for verse has taken a direction quite apart from the main stream of English tradition to which he so completely belongs. The poet of today seeks to separate himself completely from the crowd—even from the educated crowd; indeed, from the greater part of his potential readers. I have been turning over Anatole France's essays and find in them the observation that a writer should remember that he does not work alone; he owes to the world about him the language in which he writes, the forms of his expression, and even his thought comes to him very largely from outside. It is well, France says, that even a poet should remember that when one speaks it is with the purpose of being understood; and that we shall never be either great or good unless we address ourselves, not indeed to everybody, but to a large number. It is a false pride that desires to be a creature apart, shut up behind barriers of its own creating.

Watson had confidence enough in the individual character of his poetry to seek no garb of strangeness. He uttered what he knew that others were thinking and feeling, confident that he could say it for them in a way to win their gratitude. It was, indeed, this lack of strangeness, this easy solidarity with all about him that marked him so specially for the office of laureate, and many regretted that it never fell to him. But they regretted also that he should have allowed this disappointment to prey, as it did, upon his mind, and spoil his talent.

ON READING PLAYS

By Richard Hughes.

It is said that never before have plays been so widely read as they are today.

Examined strictly, of course, this is no more than an unverifiable assumption, based on the fact that more printed plays are sold. For the amateur movement, during the last decade and more, has developed out of all bounds. Amateur companies have multiplied like rabbits; and it might easily happen that twenty separate productions of some popular favourite were given on the same night, up and down the country. In most cases it is cheaper for these companies to buy a dozen copies of the play from the publisher, than to have the parts specially typed; and this must account for a very large number of the copies of printed plays sold.

Nevertheless, it may be a fact that a large surplus exists, after the practical needs of amateur companies have been allowed for. It may be the habit of buying books of plays to read is on the increase. What of it?

There is a congenitally sanguine kind of prophet, who is always ready to tell you that a Renaissance of the Drama is just round the corner. No augury is too doubtful to encourage him in believing what he wants to believe. He even feels his prophesying to be itself virtuous; that what he foretells often enough is brought by that very act nearer fulfilment. To such biassed eyes, an increase in the reading of plays will seem the surest of signs that the Drama is about to come into its own again. For such reading, they will hold, argues a growth in intelligent public interest in the theatre—and it is an axiom with such people, of course, that an intelligent public demand for genius in this sphere or that will assuredly create a supply!

But is there any kind of justification for so cheerful a reading of the omens? It does not take any very deep examination to find that the facts range themselves, on the contrary, as yet another symptom of the decay of theatrical drama. Plays are not written to be read; and nothing is so surely obsolete as when it is valued for some purpose for which it was never originally intended. Consider the parallels. Cottages thatched with straw and containing a "wealth of old oak" have ceased to serve the purpose they were built for—namely, the housing of the peasant. The peasant, just as practical today as when those cottages were first built, prefers something constructed of cement blocks, and roofed with asbestos. Yet the market value of these cottages instead of dwindling to nothing has actually risen. Diamond panes attract hikers to their teas. Oak beams, formerly decently padded with plaster, now crack the skulls of week-end intellectuals. Likewise old brass cheese-bowls are used to hold the coal. Black oak cradles, that would stifle a modern baby, hold bogus logs beside an electric fire. Sheraton bedroom commodes are

converted into wireless cabinets. (And yet the people who do these things will themselves laugh tolerantly at the story of the Solomon Islander, who was issued a pair of trousers by the missionary, and wore them proudly on his back, the legs knotted under his chin.)

To correlate the reading of printed plays with these absurdities is not so far-fetched as it looks. A play is something performed in a theatre, it is not something printed in a book. To make this truism a little more emphatic: what is printed in a book is not a *play* at all, and it is mis-statement on the part of the publishers to call it one.

* * *

Having invoked this particular truism, it is necessary to discuss it a little. For by misapplication it has been made to do a lot of harm. Chiefly it is used as a stick with which to beat the already-unfortunate dramatist: to instruct him that his place is at home with his typewriter, and not back-stage. The author, according to this theory, is a mere extractor of raw materials, like a rubber-planter: it is for the producer to take that material, and make what he will of it, without any interference from the dramatist. Now this is assuming a fallacy. It is assuming that because what the dramatist shows to a manager is a written script, his act of creation is limited to that written script. It is as if you told an architect, because he makes plans of houses, that his place is exclusively in the drawing-office; that the contractor will make a far better house of it if the architect stays there and does not interfere with what does not concern him—namely, the building of the house. Yet everyone knows that the architect, though he draws plans in two dimensions, thinks in three; that, though he draws with pencil and paper, he thinks in bricks and concrete.

What, then, of the dramatist? Why do we assume that because he writes in words, it is only in words that he thinks?

It is difficult to discuss the processes of the imagination except in the first person. I have myself attempted both arts: and I can affirm personally that the writing of narrative and the "writing" of drama differ entirely in the nature of the creative act itself. When writing narrative I think in words; entirely in words. The scenes that rise before the mind's eye are a mere impetus; unless they give birth to words they are sterile, they must be forgotten (for nothing is more dangerous to a novelist than an imagination which pictures more than he can get on paper). When writing a play, on the other hand, the whole imaginative process is different. I don't think in words. I see and hear. I see a stage in front of me, with people moving on it. These people are not "real life" people, they are actors and actresses—idealized so far as their technical abilities are concerned, of course; *perfect* actors, if you like, but actors all the same. I see every movement they make, and I hear every word they say, and every exact tone in which they say it. Nor am I unaware of the audience. I feel myself as a crowd of people, watching, listening. I feel the emotions of that crowd—for the material in which a dramatist works is not, in the last event, even a stage; it is the thoughts and feelings of those who are in front of that stage.

That is the creative act of drama. But what am I to do about it? Without a theatre and a perfectly trained cast at my disposal, how can I give this outward form? There is only one thing I can do—and it is little enough, heaven knows. I can write down the bare words that are said, and add a few notes as to the main movements which are made. But is this beggarly script my "play"? It is only the hundredth part of it.

Yet the manager will undoubtedly

assume that because this is all of my play which I can bring him, it is all that I have composed. He will assume that this script is the embryo, not the remnant, of a play; something to get to work on, not an evidence of work which has been done. I know one manager who carries this fallacy to an almost cretinous extent. He invites the author to his office, and there has the play read aloud by his secretary. Now there is something to be said for the manager who prefers to read a play to himself. If it is a bore, he can stop, or skip, as he likes. There is something, again, to be said for asking the author to read it to him: since the author might be expected to be able to reproduce at least to a minor extent, and in shallow relief, the varied tones which give the words their right effects. The author could *add* to the written word from his own knowledge. But Mr. A.'s secretary—though, as it happens, she is a highly intelligent woman—cannot conceivably do that. She can't know what is not written down. She has not even had an opportunity to read the play over to herself beforehand, to get an idea of what it is all about. If it was a publisher of novels who adopted this practice, there might be a lot to be said for it. The written word is all that the public is going to get; it might, therefore, be illuminating, by listening to a typical member of the public reading aloud from it, to discover what the public is going to make of it: but this hardly applies to a play, since it is not a script with which the public is going to be presented, it is a performance on a stage.

* * *

I argued at the beginning that a general public habit of reading plays was not a favourable symptom of the health of the theatre. I hope by now I will have made my meaning clear. A play is not, like a novel, something made of words. The words are only a fraction, and a misleading fraction, of it. A husk. Interest in the husk seldom arises till the kernel has lost its flavour.

It is a standing wonder to many that Shakespeare showed so little interest in the printing of his plays. But then, no one tried to lock Shakespeare in his study while rehearsals were on. The words are all of Shakespeare's plays that we have, and we admire them; but I doubt if Shakespeare himself thought them more than the husk of the play he had created.

The cinema, everyone admits, is now in its vigorous and early prime. But has any publisher even considered the publication, for the reading public, of the scenarios of even the greatest films? Can one buy *The Gold Rush*, hand-set on hand-made paper, numbered and signed? Or the René Clair films in uniform limp pig-skin?

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SLOUCH HAT, by Malcolm Burr. *Allen & Unwin.* 15*s.*

THIS is a book which no one who has travelled in Europe's "East End", or has ever thought of travelling there, can afford to miss. From early youth, Dr. Burr tells us, the Balkans inspired him with "a romantic boyish dream". His first visit to Montenegro was made in the summer of 1898, when he was an Oxford undergraduate "already well launched into the serious study of entomology". From then onwards, until 1926, he spent much of his life in Balkan countries, learning to speak their languages and acquiring an intimate knowledge of the races inhabiting them. During the war, as an expert linguist, he was roped into the Salonika campaign and recruited a Serbian battalion for road-making and other semi-military activities. Afterwards he lived in Serbia, first in Belgrade, then on a farm outside it, and for a time in Zagreb. Although his political sympathies appear to be with the central government, he wisely avoids controversial topics, like the Croatian question, and the only hint we get that his beloved Montenegro is not perfectly contented with its absorption in "Jugo-Slavia" is the chance observation that an old Montenegrin general, encountered on a Danube steamer, was afterwards arrested for plotting against the Union. His statement that in Serbia there is "no such thing as a military caste" will come as a surprise to readers of Liberal newspapers, who have been led to believe that the Dictatorship governs exclusively through the Army.

The value of the book lies in its vivid descriptions of journeys to little-known places, such as "Skadar the mysterious", Mostar and Karyes at the foot of Mount Athos, where even female animals are not permitted to dwell, and in its wealth of anecdote and well-drawn character sketches.

The chapters which had a special interest for myself are those in which the author describes his first visit to Montenegro. "The natives", he writes, "prefer to use the steep old footpath, consecrated by the tread of ages. I did not want the new-fangled carriage road, nor a carriage, but wished to walk as the Montenegrins had walked through their history, to explore the trail myself and tramp the whole way to Cetinje". After a stay in the capital, he walked down to Rijeka, crossed the lake to Vir Pasar by steamer, walked over the Sutorman Pass to Antivari, and then along the coast of the Primorje, through Spitsa, Castel Lastua and Budva, to Kotor. Twelve years later I made the same journey, climbing the "Scala di Montenegro" and trudging, half the way night-bound, to Cetinje. The railway from Vir Pasar to Antivari had then been built, but the coast road to Budva was still uncompleted. Budva is a perfect Venetian walled town, built on a low rocky promontory or *presqu'ile*. A jewel of a town! A fine old Slav told me proudly of himself and his fellow-townsmen: "We are *all* of the nobility, sir, since Diocletian's days".

At the end of the volume is an "Appendix" containing an informal account of the Serbian people, their history and racial characteristics. It is probably the most authoritative essay available in English on its subject.

DOUGLAS GOLDRING.

definitely civilised the

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MONTAIGNE

By A. J. Symons.

THE FORTUNES OF MONTAIGNE: A History of the Essays on France from 1580-1669, by Alan M. Boase. *Methuen.* 18s.

Les Essais de Michel Seigneur de Montaigne left the press of Simon Millanges at Bordeaux in 1580, probably published at their author's expense and enjoyed a ready sale. When he was in Paris in 1585 the third book was published and, with the former ones, considerably revised. These last volumes have hardly been a second in influence to any other of the modern world. Mr. Boase says: "If the *genre* was recognizable, was the title new? What did that mean? So far as I am aware, there is, prior to Montaigne, only one instance of the use of the word as part of a title: *Le Coup d'Essai* of François Sagon, the poem in which he attacked Clément Marot. It is Marot himself who claims the term as his own. The lines end:

> On trouvera, bien je le sais,
> Ce petit mot de Coup d'essai,
> Ou Coups d'essai que je ne mente.

In spite of this, Montaigne's title was a novelty. And the title evidently intrigued the early readers of the book."

This learned and vividly written book, which is not lacking in fascination, is an individual study not only of Montaigne and his Essays, but a History of the Essays in France from 1580 to 1669. Think, for instance, of some of his references. One finds Marie de Gournay, whom Montaigne met and who had her share of the publication of 1595. Then Pierre Charron, whom he only met once, on July 2nd, 1586; when he presented him with a book taken from his own library: *Il Catechismo o vera institutione christiana di M. Bernardino Ochino da Siena. Liber prohibitus.* "Charron intimated that God is unprovable and unknowable because infinite: God can only be conceived by a kind of mystical adoration."

To the great religious thinker of the next century—to Pascal—that man of intense genius, whose sense of the divine wrath implacably lifted against him thrust into many a spiritual and physical ambush—Montaigne was to figure as emphatically on the wrong side, not merely because "he that is not *with* us, is *against* us." "As for Pascal's *Thoughts*," said Pater, "we shall never understand them unless we realize the under-texture in them of Montaigne's very phrases, the fascination the *Essays* had for Pascal in his capacity of one of the children of light, as giving a veritable *compte rendu* of the Satanic course of this world since the Fall, set forth with all the gifts of Satan, the veritable light on things, he has at his disposal."

Pascal, *épris de hauteurs*, led forward by an intense thirst after God, is, like Spinoza and Blake, "God-intoxicated". Yet to Blake and Montaigne Spinoza's mathematical approach to truth would have been a kind of negation. In Spinoza's profound heroism of the mind, really a great humility—"he who loves God does not desire that God should love him in return"—Montaigne would have found the material for a kind of

desperate heroism, made up wholly of pride and defiance.

Mr. Boase devotes, for instance, chapters to Jean Pierre Canus and to Descartes and Montaigne, and to Chapelain and Guex de Balzac, to Pascal and Montaigne, and one to Gassendi. This writer (1592-1655) had an original genius. He said: "There is nothing in the intellect which has not been in the senses, and the imaginative faculty is the counterpart of the sense." Mr. Boase writes:

> The words which he gives his spokesman in the *Mascurat* were true of him all his life:
>
> "A te dire vrai, Saint Ange, l'une des plus grandes satisfactions que j'aie au monde, est à découvrir, soit par ma lecture, soit par un peu de jugement que Dieu m'a donné, la fausseté et l'absurdité de toutes ces opinions populaires.
>
> "Qui pourrait établir dans le monde l'incrédulité jusqu'à un certain point, en chasserait bien de la folie, *nervus enim sapientiae non temere credere.*"

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Montaigne had to confess that the sources of greatness must still be quick in the world. That had remained with him as his fixed standard of value in the estimate of men and things. He said: "I confess myself in public. The greatest thing in the world is for a man to know he is his own. If the world find fault with me that I speak too much of myself, I find fault they do not do so much as think of themselves."

Montaigne was curiously lacking in the sense of poetry; and yet he was one of the generation made famous by the poets of the Pleiad, Ronsard and Joachim du Bellay, for instance: Ronsard whose genius is limited and yet exquisite; Du Bellay lives by his one rare and lovely lyric, *The Winnower of Wheat to the Winds,* and by some of those sonnets he wrote in Rome. All this to Montaigne was alien; who, when he wonders "Shall ever to-morrow dawn?" turning back on his inveterate sense of suspended judgment, writes: "I have no other end in writing, but to discover myself, who shall peradventure be another thing to-morrow." This is fundamental; and does one not find in it, for instance, what is the essential quality of his own genius?

Montaigne, who (it is Lamb who says it) "anticipated all the discoveries of succeeding essayists," affected no humility in the statement of almost exactly the same mental complexion. So one sees in the two greatest of the essayists, first, a beautiful disorder: the simultaneous attack and appeal of contraries, sensations, without mental preference; and then, out of order in disorder, creating a harmony more logical than musical, which is really the separating and the returning of many elements into one; a pattern, like a glittering cobweb, hung on the horns of the moon's crescent, and left to swing in the wind there: an evocation of the ghost of life's absolute essence.

TRAVELS IN BOHEMIA

By Edmund Blunden.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH, by Stephen Gwynn. *Thornton Butterworth.* 15*s.*

In the *Citizen of the World,* Goldsmith has his fling at the little biographers of great men whose story might "properly be called the revolutions of a life between the fire-side and the easy-chair". On the whole, as his own life was a series of adventures entirely out of that orbit, so it has been recorded and appreciated by writers free from littleness. Forster's remarkable book, surcharged with instructive information, has perhaps served its purpose; Austin Dobson's shorter sketch is seen more often now on the bookshelves. After these and some other valuable writers on Goldsmith, there comes Mr. Stephen Gwynn; and his name is at once evidence that the new biography is not of the current types, either of slatternly re-writing or accomplished distortion.

If additions to known fact were the only justification of new biographies, then Mr. Gwynn would hardly have written this one; for, as he immediately points out, Forster and his friend Peter Cunningham in the Victorian period produced "nearly all the necessary material". Modern scholars have filled in a few crannies, but the great fabric is not much altered since the Harbitrary Gent left it. There have been several occasions recently when a new narrative of a life formerly written with ability has lacked increase of detail, and with that every other claim upon us. The claims of Gwynn on Goldsmith, apart from his unostentatious gathering-in of such addenda as he could find, are the considerable ones of an illuminative devotion, a mastery of literature, and a resourceful expression. The book has the air of vital faith in its subject; it is no revival of a character and career as being curious enough to attract passing attention, but an utterance of choice and constant praise—and compassion—for a man of genius.

As an Irishman, Mr. Gwynn takes Goldsmith's meaning, and the meaning of Goldsmith, on occasions when the rest of us would scarcely perceive it at all. This comprehension operates well in plain matters of Goldsmith's early background and experiences, and equally where Mr. Gwynn applies himself to the task of detaching the real Goldsmith from the figures cut for him by Boswell and others. He detects the joke where many have too willingly found a sample of solemnity; for instance, in the anecdote about the marionettes. "The doctor was asked how he liked these automatons. He replied, he was surprised at the applause bestowed on the little insignificant creatures, for he could have performed their exercises much better himself". The remark was snatched up as one more piece of Goldsmithian "envy"—but Mr. Gwynn explains that it was merely "his talking Irish, so to say, before English people". In his defence of Goldsmith, he will possibly (and I do not doubt quite gleefully) provoke some of the Johnsonians. To my feeling, he does less than justice to Johnson in his comments on the Abbey epitaph for Goldsmith, protesting, "Who wants to remember that Goldsmith was an historian, or student of medicine and natural history"? That

question could not have been asked when the epitaph was being composed. (Mr. Gwynn would, however, have had his chance when the Round Robin was being contrived.)

Besides, Mr. Gwynn's own book invites and assists us to remember at least that Goldsmith was a natural historian. That he was the popular historian of Greece, Rome, and England is a fact which has faded more, but, whether he wrote those chronicles for money or not, Goldsmith himself regarded them as worthy of him. In the long preface to the volumes on Rome, he attains almost the Gibbon manner: "The subject is the noblest that ever employed human attention, and instead of requiring a writer's aid, will even support him with its splendour."

I pause over one more point in which Mr. Gwynn's zeal perhaps leaves us imperfectly informed. The passage which he quotes from another Irish writer, on the abandoned project of burying Goldsmith in Westminster Abbey, asserts the insincerity of the poet's eminent friends. But, in fact, the sumptuous funeral was considerately withheld "on a slight inspection of Goldsmith's affairs" and the discovery that "he was about £2,000 in debt". If, as here, a little unfairness to Goldsmith's contemporaries in London be felt to tinge the record, it is only so much as promotes our eagerness to read on, and keeps our own enthusiasms other than for Goldsmith pleasantly active. For him, after all, the Englishman has always had a particular kindness—as I said, not even the Debunker has laid a tooth on him, though seeking whom he may devour. That happy spirit which shines through Goldsmith's misfortunes and distinguishes so much that he wrote seems to have insisted that his biography written even in the nineteen-thirties should be a thing of wise sense and felicity.

EXILE'S RETURN: A Narrative of Ideas, by Malcolm Cowley. *Cape.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

THIS autobiographical review of the movement of ideas in America after the War is ostensibly relevant only to American literature between 1916 and 1930; actually, with but little alteration, it is equally valid for any part of the Old World. It is merely a matter of chance that this brilliant and even enthralling study of the temper and illusions of our time has been made by an American.

Yet it is well that an American has done it, since, in his country, for various reasons, the tempo was faster, the emotional excitement more intense, the optimism greater and the *débâcle* more complete. He writes of the younger generation of writers whose best-known figures on this side were (the past tense is inevitable and one of the striking things about the book) Hemingway, Dos Passos, E. E. Cummings, Scott Fitzgerald, T. S. Eliot, Hart Crane, who were dubbed The Lost Generation by, ironically, another of their number, Miss Gertrude Stein. They were *lost*, because uprooted by the war from their native traditions and manner of life, because they lived much in exile, because "they had no trustworthy guides and formed for themselves only the vaguest picture of society and the writer's place in it". (Actually they were not all American—they included such masters as Joyce, Proust, Valéry; and their influence, or the influence of what made them has affected most of our own younger men.)

To give the true picture of the times Mr. Cowley covers a great deal of ground and background—his résumé of the history of such "movements" as Bohemianism and Dadaism is typically adept and proves once again that at their best the Americans have the power to produce the finest and most searching criticism of our period. In its now

swift, now leisurely course, it is amazing in its fund of information, terrible in its ruthlessness, witty in its detachment, bitter in its disillusion. And if for no other reasons these qualities make it well worth while reading. Besides, Mr. Cowley has put on record some really valuable pictures: of life in Greenwich Village—the Latin Quarter of New York; of the life of the hordes of Americans who wandered like Wandering Jews all over Europe after the war, living "mad, extravagant lives"; of these other Americans who sought for reality in country life (in the nice weather only); of the general state of society in America during the boom years. But it is more than merely interesting or amusing; it is a book of reconsidered wisdom, dearly bought and paid for, and that may be its main interest to us who have managed—or have we?—to buy our wisdom with something less than tears of blood. For we can watch, here, as from a safe seat above the arena, an eager, earnest, terrifyingly self-conscious group of young men tearing themselves through the thorns of experience to an island of rest and reconsideration of events that concern all of us, and of values that concern us even more.

What he says of them is true enough for only too many of our disillusioned generation:

> There was no escape. Whatever path they followed and the principle they chose to guide them, whether they drank gin-cocktails . . . or retired to be close to the soil . . . or wandered . . . or tried to disregard their surroundings and five only in the bitter air of masterpieces, it did not matter: the refugees of art ended always by finding the same goal; they ended in an atmosphere of hysteria and bewilderment not unlike the atmosphere of hysteria of the bourgeois society they were trying to evade.

The last phrase will suggest the *dénouement*. The financial depression hit these young men hard, and they found at least some sense of reality in various forms of socialism. Well, it is a valid way, as any way is valid that re-unites the artist to his material, and in Faulkner and Caldwell it has, for the moment, produced good stuff. It has at least enabled Mr. Cowley to reject the misantrophism of such as Mr. Joseph Wood Krutch who could actually say, only a few years ago: "We have come to see the soul of man as commonplace and his emotions as mean". As it has also enabled him to jest bitterly over the Hemingway tough-guy school—that virus which has infected so many moderns—"Yes, but just cut them open—and you will find that their souls are little tender white flowers".

As to where American literature is going, Mr. Cowley has burned his fingers too often to prophesy again. But we may hope, after reading his masterly analysis of the misfortunes of his own contemporaries, that the new men have at least learned that the more one hurries the more unlikely one is to become contemporaneous with immortality. As Anatole France said, "masterpieces are made in all innocence, Time alone crowns them", and (quoting Mazarin) "Time is a honourable man".

SEAN O'FAOLAIN.

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STATIONERY

THE OXFORD HISTORY OF MUSIC, VOL. VII, by H. C. Colles. *Oxford University Press.* 17*s.* 6*d.*

As a date, 1853, being a little less round than 1685, and offering nothing so neat as a 250th anniversary, is so much the less impressive to the majority of people; but Dr. Colles has, if not exquisite reasons, several that are good enough for taking 1853 as the point of departure for the seventh volume of *The Oxford History of Music,* entitled "Symphony and Drama." That year serves to call attention to Germany and the important musical events which were taking place there. Liszt and Wagner were among the most prominent actors in the scene, the one being at Weimar, the other (because of his part in the Dresden riots) being at Zürich. But the reader soon gathers that Brahms is to play the most important role, and, it is in that same year that he, the most inconvenient of composers, conveniently makes his entry as a creative artist. He was twenty years old. Schumann, calling attention to the magic of this young man's music, over-stated his case and helped Brahms rather less than he intended. But there was no denying the fervour of this musician, who, although he composed at the pianoforte, was preoccupied with the fantasy of orchestral sounds. So fervent was he, so single of mind, that he ended by writing four of the masterworks among symphonies, and (for we can count this also as an achievement) now has been awarded a whole chapter to himself as well as other lengthy episodes in the seventh volume of *The Oxford History of Music.*

Nearly half a century ago, Parry referred to "the noble symphonies of Brahms" as representing the highest branches of the art, and pointed out that in his grandest works the composer rarely strives after external beauty; his aim rather is beauty of thought. Even today we are justified in making that same point: Brahms's music is not obvious. Its full power and strength cannot be appraised without concentration upon its procedure. Brahms is more architect than painter. The way in which he develops themes, sub-divides them and employs the sub-divisions in the construction of a movement shows him to be a master-builder. The fact helps to explain why his major works have been so long in winning popular approval (especially in England) and also their strong appeal at the present time.

It is significant that Dr. Colles, writing about fifty years after Parry, should admire Brahms's symphonies for similar reasons. His analysis of the four works in this volume keeps us continually aware of the organic principles of their development. These are the principles, after all, which enable a work of art to endure even when the creative mind, as in Brahms's case, lacks the larger adventurousness. So it is that, while we have seen César Franck's star rise and set, Brahms's is still steadily shining. Dr. Colles points out the great value which Franck attached to semitonic melody, his cramped melodic outlines, and his instinctive feeling for tone-colouring; each of these is a sign that the composer was unable to rely upon the actual stuff of musical thought to the extent that Brahms did, for instance, in the Quintet for strings in G (op. 111).

The importance of the organic aspect of music is stressed here because it is the note Dr. Colles continually sounds throughout this volume. A consideration of the growth of the concert orchestra (from the *Eroica's* 34 instruments to *Ein Heldenleben's* 105) leads to chapters on the symphony's career in Vienna and elsewhere. What general judgment the author passes on the work of Bruckner, of Mahler, of Tchaikovsky, Borodin, Stanford and Elgar, can be anticipated by any student who knows these men's

symphonies, after he has read this premise: "Symphony is organic music. It does not depend on the use of any particular kind of musical material, or on the music being cast in any particular mould. Indeed, its organic nature makes the metaphor of cast and mould inapplicable. The one essential principle underlying it is growth."

Dr. Colles is right to insist upon that point, not only in his chapters on symphonic music but also in those on opera and song. But it will occur to more than one student, following these stimulating and clarifying pages, that growth in itself is not to be accounted a virtue. In the garden of symphonies are many weeds, possessing a nature as organic as the flowers. Indeed, in the past some of the weeds have been mistaken for cultivated blooms, precisely because they have exhibited such energy and fecundity. No doubt, a line drawn between the one kind of symphony and the other would be no less arbitrary than that which separates a wild rose from a Gloire de Dijon; but we do need a more definite criterion in judging the principles of symphonic growth, if we wish to save this particular pleasance from chaos.

This volume has been reviewed here chiefly from a student's point of view, since *The Oxford History* is designed in the first place for such a one. It seems to me that Dr. Colles's contribution meets his needs at every point, both in his illuminating analyses of various compositions and in his judging of prevailing tendencies. And since I began to read his study, I have received an enthusiastic appreciation of the volume from a student in New Zealand, an appreciation which suggested to me that there must be many eager music-lovers in all parts of the world who are now finding their way into music's grounds by way of the four symphonies of Brahms. They could have no better guide than Dr. Colles.

BASIL MAINE.

ABYSSINIAN JOURNEY, by Marcel Griaule. *John Miles.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

LET no one be deterred from reading this book by the awkwardness and obscurity of the translation. Its faults are due to literalness, and this has its curious gains as well as its losses. The gains appear in the dialogue. There is plenty of this because M. Griaule is one of those rare travellers who listen to what people are saying. For example, a hidden marksman was picking off a family of baboons, the only animals besides man to carry off their dead:

> One might ask from a certain point of view what pleasure a normal man could find in firing on this funeral procession.
>
> "The Frank," said a slave, "will become mad, since he has killed monkeys."
>
> "That is true," said another, "but that is less important than if he killed Colubus monkeys, for each of them has a soul, and many things happen when a soul escapes a body through force."
>
> "Be still," a free man said to them, "you who are in so low a condition that you cannot fire a cartridge for pleasure."

This is excellent in manner and matter. None of the recent books on Abyssinia comes near to M. Griaule's in intimacy with the people. M. Griaule, after years in the country, feels them intensely; he knows their essential nature; he presents them directly without comment, like a sardonic and heroic poet, and his book is one of those rare pieces of literature which spring from travel. It must be repeated that no contemporary book on Abyssinia comes near to M. Griaule's.

He led a French scientific expedition three or four years ago, which stayed for five months in the province of Godjam, and was befriended there by Ras Hailou, who has since been disposed of by the present Emperor. Further journeys were made with innumerable digressions, and the present narrative

is a general account from which the purely scientific matter has been extracted. The country and the people are presented almost without mention of the author. He is the presence in the caravan he describes, but little more. Known as "The European," he gives an occasional order, judges a dispute, receives and distributes gifts, and faints when a prisoner who has tried to assassinate a noble is bound in honey-waxed muslin and is slowly roasted alive before the Court. (The narrative is obscure but one gathers that the European actually witnessed this incredible event.) M. Griaule is an artist before everything else, humane, continually seeing and listening—concealed. The country speaks through him. He does not speak for or at the country.

It is hard to know what part of this book to dwell upon in a short review. The running fire of talk, imprecation and boasting in the caravan has the pungent humour, sudden anger and weird savagery of the country. These people, who seem like barking dogs rather than men, are all instinct. They may be raging about one another's genitals or exclaiming like creatures from the Psalms: "May God show you! The she-goat of So-and-So ravaged a field as beautiful as the wing of an angel."

The account of the fording of the Nile is superbly done. M. Griaule is a master of the art of describing the anxiety, the confusion of mule trains, where the beasts are overloaded, the drivers excited and full of fear. The descent to the Nile is by precipice, the ford is only a few feet wide before deep water begins, and everyone raises his eyes from dread of being made dizzy by the current. One party was swept off when a badly-loaded mule turned over in mid-stream and the company stampeded. M. Griaule's crossing was impressive. Togas were lifted and to the continuous sounds of the bugle and rifle shots—to drive off the evil spirits of the air—the whole company moved breast deep with an expression of false ecstasy into the current, while the tax officials on the other bank courteously waded in breast deep also, to greet a party travelling with royal recommendations. The boundary was in midstream; and before his own party set forth, M. Griaule had seen an evader of Custom's duty wading backwards, one fantastic oath for every step, before an advancing official. The writer has an eye for these grotesque moments of imprecation and irate dignity. The Abyssinian, he notes, is always a blunderer. The observation of crowds in all kinds of temper from the mistrustful to the stampeded is another of M. Griaule's excellent points. He feels with these people. He knows the things that are important to them and the things they fear, and they live these things, completely exposed, before the enchanted reader's eyes.

V. S. PRITCHETT.

WILLIAM COWPER AND THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, by Gilbert Thomas. *Ivor Nicholson & Watson.* 15*s.*

THE bicentenary of William Cowper's birth, four years ago, let loose a flood of biographical and critical literature, refloating a reputation which had somewhat receded into a back-water; and in the meanwhile (not to crack the wind of the metaphor), the sea of commentary has been growing choppy. It may well be the fortune of Mr. Thomas's wise, understanding, and comprehensive monograph to bring the discussion into harbour. Not, to be sure, without squalls. This is a controversial, provocative book; it may not command universal assent. But one thing about it cannot be denied: it is entirely free from the foible of the modern biographer, who is prone to form his estimate before he has marshalled his facts, and then to pick his facts to

fit his estimate. Nor does he make the common mistake of judging an historical character by modern standards. It is indeed the essence of Mr. Thomas' theory that nothing about William Cowper's life—his character, his poetry, his madness, his religion—can be understood at all without a preliminary understanding of the spirit of the time, the religion of the time, and the pressure of outward circumstances upon Cowper's mental and spiritual struggles towards the light. So his first task is to set the poet in his natural environment, which he does through the medium of two vivid and highly interpretative chapters, dealing with the social and religious condition of England in the eighteenth century.

The Augustan Age in our own country has, no doubt, been invested with a good deal of tinsel decoration; it has been pictured from the standpoint of the coffee house and the Mall. Mr. Thomas takes us out into the country, which Cowper knew and loved, a region of great natural beauty, but of squalid social poverty, ignorance, and degradation. He reminds us of the apathy of the village manses, the ungodliness of the proletariate, the chaos of theological differences. And then he pictures the Evangelical revival as penetrating the darkness with a sudden stream of light; and of this revival Cowper is displayed as poet laureate. He was not indeed a poet born and bred; his temperament was critical rather than creative. In Mr. Thomas's own illuminating phrase: "If Lamb be the poet among our essayists, Cowper is certainly the Elia among our poets". He had been a convinced Evangelical for fifteen years before, at the age of forty-eight, he even began to write the moral verses by which he is now remembered. But the spirit of the age had been stealthily moulding him to its service.

He was innately virtuous, a constitutional zealot, whose warm heart yearned for a personal faith. But the tabernacle of Evangelicalism was rent into two divisions; and Cowper was distracted by the schism. He recognized the logic of Calvin, and it tormented him. He was perpetually harassed by the sense of his own unworthiness, with its accompanying fear of predestined damnation. That way his madness lay. But, when his heart won the victory over his head, faith led him into the sunlight. "Charity and true spiritual vision break in upon his dourest sermonizing." Nature consoled his solitude, and in Nature he saw the handiwork of God. His love of natural beauty led him to the contemplation of spiritual beauty. In moments like these his soul was at peace with itself.

Here at last is a consistent and convincing portrait of a singularly elusive temperament, and it emerges from a setting of rich and lifelike detail. The stage of Cowper's environment is full of figures, and everyone of them is here invested with personality and character. Mr. Thomas has immersed his imagination in the spirit of the age, and his panorama of the Evangelical revival is a notable contribution to literary and religious history. It explains Cowper and his poetry as no rival estimate has ever explained them; and however much of challenge criticism may bring to bear upon some of his conclusions, there can be no denying the reasonableness and humanity of the survey as a whole. "All the new spiritual and ethical values implicit in Evangelicalism—the hatred of slavery, oppression, and cruelty; the love of Nature and of simple domestic joys; the deeper regard for women, children, the poor and animals—found in Cowper their first clear voice." He was a bridge-builder in a stormy strait; and the bridge he built withstands the test of time.

ARTHUR WAUGH.

THE DUBLIN REVIEW

October, 1935

Founded in May, 1836 by Dr. Nicholas Wiseman, first Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, in co-operation with Daniel O'Connell, to play a vital part in the Catholic Revival, the *Dublin Review* pursues its original aim in providing a survey of current events and thought by Catholic thinkers and scholars of the highest competence.

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THE NOTEBOOKS OF A WOMAN ALONE, edited by M. G. Ostle. Introduction by Geraldine Waife. *Dent.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

MIDDLE AGE : 1885-1932. *Constable.* 10*s.*

THERE is something oddly moving about both these books. So one writes, and then pauses to wonder whether the adjective at least is any more than the professional writer's too complacent comment upon more than usually unprofessional products. What, if so, is his warrant for superiority? Here, in each of these volumes, is the essence of a woman's life, in one case the fruit, in the other the straightforward record, of not quite half a century of joys and sorrows, the common texture of daily life. Experience, when deeply felt, creates its own expression, and both these women own the honesty, the sincerity, which is content to be simple. They tell of, in general, the most ordinary things, and yet as one reads the words of Keats, quoted by one of them, echo in the mind: " A man's life of any worth is a continual allegory, and very few eyes can see the mystery of his life ". These are, we become persuaded, lives of worth, and in these pages we do begin to discern a little of their " mystery ".

The book of the Woman Alone is just what its title declares it—a compilation very largely made up of brief quotations from authors living and dead, famous and obscure, interspersed with the thoughts and comments and, more occasionally, experiences of the recorder, Evelyn Wilson, who, it is said, is now dead. Her life was distressing. She was never happy at home, and later, as a governess, found much unkindness. Her gladdest days were the twenty years of her work at a London employment agency, where she plainly exerted herself to the utmost to help girls and women of her own kind, but she walked always on the verge of poverty, worried for her own future and by the distress of others, lonely, unloved, pitiful. Pitiful—and yet not pitiful! She wanted so little: a bare security, a room of her own " where I may be myself, and neither apologize for, nor justify, my presence ", a place " where my failures would not matter and where my successes would count as nothing, provided I loved and let myself be loved ". In their lack she found her consolation in books, in the high thoughts of others gathered from many sources, thoughts most of them which, it is plain, echo, strengthen, *vindicate* herself. Pitiful indeed—and yet not pitiful! For as she says she did truly find riches by the wayside; she was taught more by pain than ease could have given her; by grief she came to beauty—the beauty of a soul that faces a hard world with courage and above all with charity and kindness, " keeping strong for herself, but tender for the weak ". Her book is not a happy one, not only because even she in the end preferred to die rather than fight on against steepening odds, but because her lot is too clearly that of not a few other women (and even some men) today. But it is a fine book, which may pass on its bravery, its consolation, to those who need it most. Would to heaven the world's self-satisfied might be made to read it too!

The anonymous, or rather pseudonymous, *Middle Age* is cast in somewhat lighter mood, as the candid unaffected chronicle of a woman born in 1885, brought up in a very happy Nonconformist household first in Hampstead and then in Manchester, amid cultured, considerate relatives and friends, and truly encountering sorrow only as she entered the stresses of love and an unfortunate marriage. It is a book whose peculiar quality is harder to define, yet in this artless rambling narrative the full character of late Victorian and Edwardian family life,

he will be read for a long time to come.

That same critic will possibly have to concede a chapter to the "proletarian novel". I am uncertain whether the archetypic proletarian novel is supposed to be written about the proletariat for the bourgeoisie (explanatory), or about the bourgeoisie for the proletariat (defamatory), but I hope that nothing like *Daughters of Albion* will fit the category. If a loyal Communist critic would consider it prudent or dutiful to praise this swollen novelette as significant, then the question of the status of literature in a Communist society is answered once and for all. In a postscript to his enormous and remarkably bathetic compilation Mr. Alec Brown gives a briefly class-conscious analysis of "the jargon of Caxton and company", and describes the language of his own work —stylistically indistinguishable from the huge mass of what has been called *ancillary* literature—as "a step forward towards what is needed". As to his matter, his case against the middle-class, supported by an elaborate series of sentimental bedroom scenes (this, by the way, is another of those "not for the squeamish" books that are so popular), has a parallel in the reasons put forward by the Nazi leaders for the murders of Roehm and the others. Mr. Brown is angry, often with justice, at social conditions today. But he must concede a similar privilege to the patient reviewer. *Daughters of Albion*, by the way, is the fiction choice of the Book Guild.

Miss Phyllis Bentley is a thoughtful, good-humoured, and inquisitive writer who takes her craft seriously. Her style is amiably unpretentious, but always adequate to its purpose, and she is in no doubt about the proper study of mankind. Of these seventeen short stories I would pick out *True Reward*, *The Shoes*, *The Photograph*, *Posting a Letter*, and the eponymous *The Whole of the Story*, as the best; but any one of them, shrewd, economical, and tolerant as they are, would restore the dogged reader of Mr. Brown's book to a sense of those values which are the concern even of "contemporary" writers.

FRANCIS WATSON.

THE NOVEMBER ISSUE
will contain an enlarged
AUTUMN BOOK REVIEW SECTION
including a special article
on
MODERN SCOTTISH LETTERS
by
ERIC LINKLATER